

THE
L I F E
OF THE
MARCHIONESS
DE
POMPADOUR.

THE FOURTH EDITION:

Revised and Enlarged by the

AUTHOR OF THE FIRST VOLUME,

WITH A

Continuation from 1757 to her Death.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

L O N D O N:

Printed for S. HOOPER, at the East Corner of
the New-Church in the Strand.

2

O perjured Man Hungate fell to his
kind Friend J. W. & also cheated him of
50^l. In 1765. D^r Chome, W^r Lowndes,
Owen, Conant - W^r Tho Bowles Stationer
& W^r Lowdell. The 2 marked thus know it
to be true. The others on strict Enquiry, found
it to be so -



ADVERTISEMENT.

SOME years ago the public curiosity had been much excited, by the influence which the marchioness de Pompadour had obtained over the French king; and to gratify that curiosity, there were published, in the year 1758, the memoirs of that celebrated lady, compiled as near the truth as the best authorities at that time would admit; and, though the subject may not be, in general, esteemed quite so interesting now, as on their first publication, yet the number of editions they have since gone through, both at home and abroad, * together with the measures that have been taken, by the French court, to suppress their circulation, † sufficiently evince them to be of a nature deserving the public attention. It is, indeed, impossible, that the history of a personage, who had so considerable an influence over the councils of one of the

* Even the first Edition of this work, imperfect as it was, was translated into most of the European languages: In Germany it was re-printed fourteen times.

† A French impression at the Hague, was totally suppressed, at the requisition of the French ambassador,

ADVERTISEMENT.

greatest potentates in Europe, and of course on many of the principal transactions of her times, should fail of being interesting, so long as the consequences of such transactions are remembered, so much to the satisfaction of some nations, and the mortification of others.

Posterity may deny a Pompadour so great a portion of fame, as it has bestowed on a Maintenon; certain, however, it is, that the latter will tread as close on the heels of the mistress of Lewis XIV. as the fame of her royal paramour approaches to that of his heroic grandfather.

This consideration is a sufficient apology for the editor's revising a work, which, he cannot doubt, will be still acceptable to the public; especially as he hath profited by the means of farther enquiry and information to elucidate several anecdotes, which appeared to some readers vague or uncertain; to correct others, and to enlarge the whole, by many that are altogether new, and of equal authenticity. In short, the whole has undergone such a correction and remodel as to render this edition nearly a new work.

T H E
L I F E
O F
MADAM DE POMPADOUR.

CONsidering the class of life, in which mademoiselle Poisson was born, no wonder it is, that where so little attention is given to the gallantries of that obscure sphere, the ascertainment of the particulars of her birth and extraction should be rather difficult. The following account of her, as being the most likely, is pre-

VOL. I

B

ferred to a number of others which have been propagated.

This celebrated lady's father, or rather reputed father's name, was Poisson, butcher to the invalids. Sometime after he was married, he fell under the cognizance of the law, and was hanged in effigy for a rape; himself having, by flying the kingdom, escaped personal execution. There he stayed till he obtained his pardon at the intercession of madam de Pompadour, or at least on her account.

Her mother, who was one of the most beautiful women in France, did not, in the absence of her husband, deliver herself up to a vain barren affliction. That she might not want for consolation, she pitched upon two declared gallants at once, publicly

known to be her keepers; monsieur Paris de Montmartel, and monsieur le Normant de Tournéhem, both in great employments in the revenue.

A woman capable of having thus two men at her service at the same time, is not supposed too scrupulous to have more, though less openly. It is certain however that madam Poisson had the reputation of dispensing her favors very liberally. While her husband was absent, in or about the year 1722, she was brought to bed of a daughter, who was afterwards to make so great a figure in the French annals. Chronology cannot afford the least reason to imagine that this rare production was the work of her absent husband. Messieurs Paris and le Normant being the most apparent of her lovers, were competitors

for the honor of a paternity, which, perhaps, on a strict examination, would have come out to belong to neither.

Madam Poisson had, it seems, her reasons for preferring monsieur le Normant. She persuaded him, that he was actually the father of the child; and as a proof that he was persuaded, he took upon himself, to the utmost, a father's care. Being bred under his eye and particular direction, there was no accomplishment omitted for her education. Dancing, music, singing, painting, were all bestowed upon her, and she had talents for them all. Nothing could be more amiable than her person, or the sprightliness of her temper.

Without monsieur le Normant's prepossession of her being his own natural daughter, her beauty, and even the

pains he had taken to form her, and the extraordinary improvement she made under his care, could not fail to endear her to him. His fondness for her grew to such a height, that in due season he began to think of making a provision for marrying her, in a manner that showed she was not less dear to him than a legitimate daughter.

Among a number of conquests which her growing beauty had made, was that of the young monsieur le Normant d'Estiolles, his nephew. His being so near a relation, procured him an easy access to the house, and frequent sight of the young Poisson. Nor could he see her with impunity. The charms of her person in the first spring of her bloom, the graces of her air, and the accomplishments of her education, had entirely subdued and captivated him.

His views being honorable, the difficulty was not to break the matter to his uncle, her supposed father, but to his own; whom he could not expect to find very reconcilable to a match, against which there were so many objections.

The nephew's passion and fondness however, for his fair cousin, soon brought over and reconciled the uncle. The business was now to bring over the young gentleman's father, which was not an easy matter. At length, monsieur le Normant prevailed, through the efficacy of his offers, which was to lay down half his fortune, for the present, and to settle the other half at his death, on his son.

The fear of these advantages going, with the supposed daughter, into an-

other family, joined to the passionate solicitation of the lover, induced the father to hearken, and at last to close with his brother's proposal. The young pair were married, and mademoiselle Poisson was now madam d'Estiollles.

It does not however appear that her heart had been greatly consulted in this match. Monsieur le Normant d'Estiollles had not the most engaging person, being rather diminutive, ill-favored, and upon the whole a very mean ordinary figure.

Yet, if any thing could atone for the want of personal merit to touch the heart of a lady, he must have been master of her's, as the lover did not sink with him into the husband. His fortune being easy, there was no expence, in dress or diversions, spared that might prove his passion for her.

Though she had charms enough to make a lover, and especially a husband-lover, with his figure, jealous; he indulged her in all the liberty she could wish. He assembled and entertained at his house the best and most agreeable company that Paris afforded, and of which herself was the life, from her gaiety, and not the least ornament, from her beauty.

Among the numbers that resorted thither, many were drawn there by designs upon her; and as they had the double facility of declaring themselves, from the manners of the French, which are far from being unfavorable to gallantry, and from her sprightliness, which was far from discouraging, they were not long without acquainting her with their sentiments.

Among these was the abbot of Bernis, since cardinal and minister of state. The first foundations of his fortune were then undoubtedly laid by his passion for this lady, who, tho' she did not think fit to gratify him in the way he desired, preserved a grateful remembrance of him when she came into power.

It was by her intercession he was first named ambassador to Venice; and, by rapid degrees, her patronage procured him still higher promotion. Yet he was originally no more than of an obscure family, in Pont St. l'Esprit, a little town of Languedoc, on the borders of Venaissin.

Nor was the abbot himself known at first but by some little verses, most of them in praise of his fair madam d'Es-

tiolles; in which, though they did not want for a certain easiness of composition, there was certainly too little merit to have got him a place in the Royal Academy, if his patroness had not made a point of it.

But if his genius for poetry was not held a very superior one, his talents for politics were thought still less so. Nor did the public, especially at that time, entirely approve of madam de Pompadour's promoting this, sometime, Celeron of hers; possibly from thinking it much easier to make him a minister than a statesman; yet his conduct in the ministry removed a great deal of that prejudice against him.

However, he and a number of others had sighed for this lady, who, by the indulgence of her husband, was deliver-

ed up, as it were, to their courtship; but sighed in vain. For, though the world has not spared her character, since her success, or rather fall, with the French king, it is generally agreed that, till then, she had gone no farther than mere coquetry, to the prejudice of the faith due to her husband. It is true, she gave no lovers that offered absolute repulses, but probably, she granted no particular favors to any of them.

The most pressing she put off, with saying, "That if she ever wronged her husband, it should not be with any one but the king." All of them laughed at this, and perhaps, at that time, had reason to imagine, that the jest would never be realized into an earnest which does so much honour to the Italian proverb: "If you will be

“ pope, take it strongly into your head
“ that you shall be pope.” Though this
declaration had nothing more in it than
an air of gaiety, the dispositions she
made were not the less serious.

She had designed the conquest of the
king, and was determined to omit no-
thing conducive to the atchievement
of it. One of the king’s favorite di-
versions was known to be that of hunt-
ing. She pretended to her husband, a
fondness for it herself; to which he was
far from having the least objection. A
riding-habit was instantly procured, the
most exquisitely imagined, as in taste she
ever excelled. For working the design-
ed effect, and for striking the blow she
meditated, she managed so as to attend
the king constantly in his hunting-par-
ties, not as one of the court indeed,

but simply, as a spectatress of the sport.

Thus she contrived to throw herself in his way, as often as possible. But all would not do. She had the mortification to find herself disappointed at the expence of so many attractions, and advances.

The king, however, could not pass unobserved so beautifully conspicuous a figure, but then it was without any emotions of love or desire that he had taken notice of her, or had even asked who she was.

But she did not escape the piercing eyes of a rival, and a rival so much in possession of the king's heart, which was at that time shut up against the impressions of any other.

This was madam de Mailly, daughter

of the marquis de Nesle. She had taken notice of madam d'Estiolle's affectation of attending the chace, of her way-laying, as it were, the king, and playing off her charms in his eyes; she had been alarmed with the enquiry he had made concerning her; and, to cut short any views she might have of succeeding by a persistence in her designs, she, with all the authority of a favorite, sent her word, never to shew herself at any hunting-party of the king's again.

Madam d'Estiolles, who was in no condition of life to measure with madam de Mailly, thought herself obliged to obey the intimation. Thus, for that time, her pretensions were, if not at an end, at least suspended.

As this suspense makes an interval in her history, it may not be impro-

perly filled up with a summary account of the French king's gallantries ; an account so necessary to the clear comprehension of the whole, that it can hardly pass for a digression.

Lewis the XVth was, at a very tender age, being barely turned of fifteen, married to Mary the daughter of Stanislaus Lecinski, some time king of Poland, late duke of Lorrain ; she was seven years older than himself.

With this princess the king lived for a number of years, in the most exemplary strain of conjugal affection, though the match had been made, as those of his rank generally are, without consulting in the least his inclination, or so much as the likelihood of its ever being so. The person of the queen had never been extremely engaging.

The disparity of years, though indeed not a great one, must be of some consideration. A numerous issue attested however the union that reigned between them, and seemed to ensure its duration. The king, bred under cardinal Fleuri to strict notions of conjugal fidelity, did honor to his preceptor in the scrupulous observance of them; habit too joined to confirm what duty had begun. The queen had besides a thousand good qualities which might have compensated for any personal defects. It is probable that for a long time the king had not so much as a roving thought to her wrong. He had even pretty smartly rebuffed some of those courtiers, who, mean enough to seek that advantage from the vices of a king, which they have not to hope from his

virtues, had attempted to seduce him. To one of them, who was with that view extolling to him the charms of a court lady, "what!" said he sharply, "do you "think her handsomer than the queen?" The courtier had not a word to reply, he was so choaked with this answer.

Such constancy was not made to stand, eternally, proof against the power of example, in so corrupt a court.

Ten or twelve years, however, were passed before the king gave any signs of weariness, or inclination to ramble. It is said the queen's person had, with her growing years, and frequent child-bearing, contracted a coldness or indifference unfavorable to the claims of love. The disproportion of age also began more and more to shew itself. The regard the king had for her, as

the common parent of his children, as well as for her excellent temper, and unaffected piety, made him not easily, nor without many conflicts with himself, depart from his system of justice to her bed. But when he had once burst the bars that held him, and yielded to the calls of his constitution, which was naturally amorous, he, like a torrent that had been before restrained by its banks, overflowed all the fields of licentiousness.

In the midst however of the most unbounded alienation of his person from the queen, he always preserved inviolable, the tenderest regard and esteem for her. It is true, that from a spirit of moderation, she rarely intermeddles so much as to ask any favor; but whatever she asks is granted without hesita-

tion, and with the best grace imaginable.

Her conduct then, has rendered her not only the darling of the people, but even of the court itself, where virtue does not always meet with that justice, which the superiority of her's compelled.

When the king first began to give a loose to his inclinations, and to talk of his will and pleasure to have them gratified, in the peremptory tone of a master, cardinal Fleuri was soon apprized of it.

This old, subtle, refined courtier, knew the world, and especially the temper of his pupil, too well to think he would brook restraint in a point, where few men are capable of suffering any. He would indeed have wished it

otherwise, but thought it most prudent to connive at it, and even under-hand to direct where the storm of the royal appetite should fall; which having at that time no determinate object, but the sex in general, he judged the king's business was with the readiest. Upon this plan, he said, "*He! bien donc, qu'on fasse venir la Mailly.*" Well then, since it must be so, let "la Mailly be sent for." La Mailly was accordingly sent for, and la Mailly came. Few ladies at that court would have refused to pick up the royal handkerchief, or rather not have scrambled for it.

The king was so pleased with Mailly, that he kept to her for some time, not without her deserving it. No mistress ever made less advantage of a royal

gallant. She was generous to excess. She obtained no favors from him for herself. Charitable, good-natured, affable, and obliging, she repaid in some measure, by a number of virtues, the blemish of her honor.

So far from pillaging him, she received the little presents he made her with great reluctance. Among others, the king one day, sent her a pair of gold candlesticks, at which she laughed, and only said, his majesty ought not to have forgot the snuffers: and this she said, more because she thought it pleasant, than from any selfishness. When he left her, she threw herself into a deep devotion, died in a convent, and died insolvent. So little harvest had she made of her favor.

But if the king quitted her, it was

only for a sister of her's. There were five of them, all daughters to the marquis de Nesle; Lauraguais, Mailly, Vintimiglia, la Tournelle, and Flavacourt, all of whom became his mistresses, in their turns (and some of them at one time) except madam Flavacourt, the handsomest of them, to whom the king had a great inclination; but her husband was so rude and unpolished, that he preserved her only by telling her, that she might if she pleased, play him false, but if she did, that no king on earth should hinder him from shooting her through the head. This single exception however did not hinder the old gentleman their father the marquis from saying, "that since his majesty had lain with his whole family, there remained only

“himself for him to consummate the
“honor upon.”

Madam de Vintimiglia, who was
the next, had a son by him, that was
covered by her being married.

To her succeeded madam de Tour-
nelle, who was created, by him, dutchess
de Chateauroux, whom there is reason
to think he loved the best of any of
her sisters, and, perhaps, not less for
the piquancy of the circumstance of
her not loving him. Love had pre-
ingaged her heart in favor of another
object, so that her royal gallant owed
her favors merely to her ambition, or
more probably yet to the persuasion of
her relations. The king had, at the
instances of his confessor, during his
sickness at Mentz, renounced any far-
ther commerce with her. But this

extorted declaration remained in force no longer than till his health returned.

The lady received assurances of a renewal, but did not survive the reception of them above two or three days. As she had given broad hints of her disposition to revenge certain slights and ill offices done her, during the suspension of her influence in the time of the king's illness, her death, just at that critical instant, gave rise to a report, which presently became current that she had been taken off by poison. But that suspicion was so ill grounded, as not to deserve the least degree of credit. There was a more probable one offered, that she had perished by an attempt to procure the abortion of a pregnancy, occasioned by her recourse to a happier lover, in whose

favor she had often treated the king rather cavalierly. She had also not behaved to the queen with that respect which common decency might have required.

As to madam de Lauraguais, another of the sisters, she had had only a transient part in his affections, in the course of her employ of confidante to the intrigues of her sisters.

All these passions were now over, either by death or satiety. An interval succeeded, in which the king, no longer attached to any particular mistress, resolved to try the charms of variety; to which he even sacrificed delicacy. He had women brought him, from among all orders of the people, not excluding the lowest, or what they call grizettes.

By this last we understand here such nymphs as are scarce above the form of a stuff-gown, checked apron, and colored handkerchief. In this way, he was chiefly served by Richelieu, one of his gentlemen of the bed-chamber, who having apartments at Versailles, made *petits soupers* at them, where he invited his master, and introduced such objects as he thought would please him.

He was however sometimes disappointed of the acceptance of his catering. Of this there were two remarkable instances, in the two famous ladies, madam de la Popeliniere, and madam de Portail. The king would touch neither of them.

The first, though she had great wit he thought too affected.

The other, though very handsome, appeared to have something too mean, too vulgar in her air, which was perhaps the more glaring for its so little assorting with the richness of her dress. Had she been in a plain jacket and pettycoat, she might have struck his taste the more.

But as I have given the epithet of famous to these ladies, those readers who are already acquainted with the reason why they are styled so, will, I presume, forgive a succinct digression in favor of those who are not so well informed as themselves.

Madam de la Popeliniere had been an opera-girl, and was taken off the stage by monsieur de la Popeliniere, a rich farmer-general of the revenue, who married her. Upon which, pro-

bably, thinking she could not make too much haste to punish him for so great a folly, she gave a loose to gallantry. That musk-and-amber-hero, Richelieu, was, however, at the head of her list of favourites. He had hired a lodging at a tapestry-weaver's, contiguous to her apartment, with which there was contrived a communication by a door in the chimney, that was concealed by the back of a high grate. This mystery was detected on the first quarrel of the lady with her maid; and the poor husband, instead of taking measures for concealing his disgrace, in the heat of his resentment, published it with all the circumstances that could make him ridiculous.

At Paris the laughs are rarely on the side of an unfortunate spouse.

The scheme of the chimney was thought so pleasant, that it did honor to madam de la Popeliniere to whom the invention was attributed.

Her name became so famous that it was given to various things. It was a fashion to have caps *a-la-Popeliniere*, ribbons, hoops, fans, and so forth *a-la-Popeliniere* : and not improbably some had chimnies *a-la-Popeliniere*.

As to madam de Portail, wife of the president de Portail, her interview with the king, though not pushed the length she could have wished, a failure she attributed to the excess of respectful love with which she had inspired him, produced an event pleasant enough.

Pretty, but silly and vain, nothing could persuade her but that she had

made a compleat conquest of the king, and that nothing but an opportunity was wanting for him to give the finishing stroke to it.

In this idea, at a great and general mask-ball, she singled out one whose air, make, and even voice, had resemblance enough to the king, to excuse her mistaking him. She had plucked off her mask, and began to teize and provoke him. The supposed royal gallant, who was only of the king's guards, knew her and humored the mistake; but humored it so as to take all the advantages he could desire. Nothing was refused him. After which, she returned to the company ruffled enough in all conscience, and heartily pleased with her adventure, in the notion of its being the

king, with whom she had been engaged.

Her exultation did not last long. The guard, who did not think himself greatly bound in gratitude for a favor not designed for him, and thought the jest too rich a one to be sunk upon the public, followed her into the ball-room, and only told every one he met his good fortune. The lady's confusion was complete.

This very story is related with more humor and more at large, under fictitious names, in the *Bijoux Indiscrets*.

The lady, however, some time after, fell into a much worse scrape. She was accused of having conspired with her cook and porter to poison her husband.

This charge was not indeed pushed

the length of a legal trial, which might have ended fatally for her: nay, the husband was willing to stifle the affair; but madam Pompadour, who owed her a grudge for having had designs upon the king, worked underhand so effectually, that she procured a *Lettre de cachet* to shut her up close prisoner in a convent, on the strength of the presumptions against her.

But here love took charge of her release. There was one D'Arboulín, wine-merchant to madam Pompadour, who was making a great fortune in that business. He had been in love with madam de Portail, and now hoped he should have a better chance with her in her distress, than he could have flattered himself with in her prosperity.

In this view he exerted his interest with madam Pompadour, whose resentment was, by this time, in some measure appeased, and who could now have nothing to dread from a woman so thoroughly crushed; and by her means obtained madam de Portail's discharge; who being separated from her husband, rewarded her deliverer to his wish, and lived with him openly.

Such were two of the ladies, who had the honor of being presented, and the mortification not to be accepted by the king. But after running the common for some time, he began to be disgusted at once, with the facility and variety of the women brought to him, who, he found, rather perplexed, than satisfied, his taste for pleasure.

In this mood, one night, as he was going to bed, he mentioned the unpleasingness of his situation to one Binet, a valet-de-chambre then in waiting.

He told him he was heartily tired with new faces every day, and still without meeting with any woman worth his attachment, which he should prefer to this range through the sex; and asked him if he knew of any one he could recommend in particular, that had merit enough to relieve him from the trouble and disgust of changing so often.

Binet, to whom such a confidence was highly welcome, assured the king, that he had a person in his eye for him, that he was sure would please him, and was a cousin of his own; and

that, besides, she had a real passion for his majesty's person.

This piqued the king's curiosity to ask him who it was: and who should it be, but the very individual madam d'Estiolles, the late madam Pompadour. Binet then proceeded to remind him that he had seen her, at his hunting-parties, and had even taken notice of her. The king recollecting her perfectly, owned that he had liked her, as much as any one then engaged with another could. He added, that he should be glad to have a private interview with her, if it could be conveniently managed.

Binet now had his cue, and the next day, posted to madam d'Estiolles, and acquainted her with what had passed. She received the summons with rap-

ture, and measures were immediately concerted for her lying out, without incurring the suspicion of her husband.

At the time appointed, she waited on the king, who passed the night with her, and the next morning dismissed her coolly enough. Nor did he so much as mention her name to Binet, either the next day or for many days afterwards.

It is easy to guess at the vexation of the confident, and especially of the mistress who had depended so much on the power of her charms, and who had now such reason to think that the enjoyment of them had not left impressions on the king's memory, favorable enough to resummon desire.

Above a month passed in this manner, when one night, the king simi-

ingly asked Binet, what his cousin thought of him? His answer is easily anticipated. He told his majesty she was full of nothing, thought of nothing, dreamed of nothing but him. "To say the truth, said the king, I was afraid she was too like the rest of those I have had, either actuated by ambition, or, perhaps, by yet a more sordid passion, that of interest; otherwise, I cannot but say, I had liked her very well. I had a mind to try how she would take my neglect."

Binet was not so little of a courtier, interested especially as he was in the issue of this affair, not to give his majesty all the assurance fit to revive his inclination, and to quiet his doubts.

He observed particularly that in-

terest, or at least so low an one, as that of a common hireling, could not have a great weight with her; since she was so easy in her fortune, and that, to his knowledge, she had always expressed a passion merely for his person. “Well, said the king, if you really “think so, I shall be glad to see her “again.” That point was easily adjusted. The second interview took place, and had not the like consequence as at first. She now captivated him to such a point, that he was uneasy till he saw her again.

The first meeting had taken place, under the shelter of such profound secrecy that the adventure had not in the least taken air, though in a court, where it is hardly possible for a king, whose every motions are constantly

watched, to conceal a step of this nature. But the second interview was, by some indiscretion, so completely divulged, that the very next evening she supped in company with eight or nine gentlemen of her acquaintance, every one of whom knew that she had been the night before in the king's arms; by the same token, that some of them have had cause since to regret that they did not, at that time, pay such a court to her, as might have been of service to them afterwards in their views of interest. But the truth is, that not one of them had annexed any such idea of consequence, to that circumstance, as the event shewed it deserved. Some of them were indiscreet enough, to throw out, on the occasion, certain arch allusions to her adventure which were long after remembered against them.

But with all the noise this piece of gallantry made, poor d'Estiolles was, as is commonly the hard fate of husbands in his situation, entirely ignorant of the injury done him ; and la Pompadour had just reason to think that he loved her too well to bear it without a violent resentment. Guilt is always timid. Her distress then grew serious when her adventure became known, which being put into a ballad with such circumstances as fixed it undeniably on her, was called for at a ball, under the name of d'Estiolle's country-dance. She could not well after this flatter herself, that her false step could longer escape the ears of her injured husband, whose vengeance she dreaded, though insensible to his love.

In this dilemma, she had recourse,

for advice, to monsieur Normant de Tournéhem, whom she knew well enough to conclude that he would be less scandalized at her conduct, than pleased with the prospect of those advantages that might be reaped from such a connection. She sent for him to her mother's house, where, in the first of her fright she had retreated, and to whose instructions it is generally thought her success was greatly owing, madam Poisson being perfectly skilled in all the mysteries of gallantry, and all the arts of pleasing. These instructions were seconded by a happy aptness in the daughter to profit by them. And be it here digressively observed, as there will not be occasion to mention the mother again, that she died soon after she had seen the

thorough establishment of her daughter's favor; at which, perhaps, her overjoy contributed to shorten her days.

It was then with monsieur Normant, and madam Poisson, that the little family-council was held on the great event, from which the resentment of d'Estiolles was so reasonably apprehended: and to measure it by his real passion for his unworthy wife, there was no saying to what extremes it would not go. But monsieur Normant, with a cooler head, seeing, in these terrors, an opening for a stroke of state, gave her advice, which, on her following, at once saved her from the fury of an enraged husband, and decided her fortune with her royal gallant.

Accordingly, in a studied disorder of dress and countenance, she flew to

gh- Versailles, obtained admittance, and,
her with all the pathos she could muster,
ays, threw herself at his majesty's feet, and
ant, implored his protection. With a voice
fa- almost choaked with sighs and sobs, she
reat paints her husband apprised of her in-
of fidelity, and ready to revenge it with a
pre- dagger or a cup of poison. In short, she
real threw such a tragic air into her lamen-
ere tations, that the good-natured monarch
it was almost as much frightened as she
for- appeared to be, for she was ever an ad-
in mirable actress. In this urgent crisis
oke then, he was prevailed on by his own
her tender fears to offer her an assylum in
the his palace, which she readily accepted,
id- and which had, perhaps, been her aim,
nt. in this step. From that moment, her
of apartment became fixed at Versailles,
to where she soon plucked off the mask,

and, sure of protection, boldly hoisted the flag of defiance.

Poor d'Estiolles, thus robbed of his wife, naturally exhaled his resentment in the bitterest invectives against her baseness, her infidelity, her ingratitude, and made the world resound with his complaints. He even wrote to her a letter in that strain, in which his passion transported him into expressions rather disrespectful to the king, whom he treated as guilty of an act of tyranny. The king, indeed, on being shewn it, made just allowances for the rage of an incensed husband, and was most graciously pleased to forgive him; which, in that meridian of slavery, was held a high act of clemency and royal moderation. But when d'Estiolles continued so unreasonable as not to be

satisfied with this transcendent goodness, and was actually taking measures for getting her person into his possession again, her fears procured a *lettre de cachet* for him, banishing him to Avignon.

Forced to obey, he went to his place of exile, where, still distractedly fond of his wife, his violent agitations threw him into a desperate fever. He recovered, however, by the strength of his constitution, and the advice of his friends, representing to him the folly of throwing away his life, for the sake of a false, ungrateful woman, who would only rejoice at it.

He staid about a twelve month at Avignon, when time and reflection operating a due effect, he grew more reconciled to his fortune. He then

made interest for leave to return to Paris, which he obtained on the promise of a passive acquiescence and of a non-reclaimer of his wife, now firmly fixed in the king's affections.

To this favor, if such it may be called, were added advantages considerable enough to make him easy; if fortune could compensate the loss of the person one loves.

He had places and employments to the amount of more than four hundred thousand livres a year, besides gratifications for favors he should ask for others, which were sure to be granted him. Though he never saw his wife, they corresponded amicably together by letters; and when madam Pompadour went to plays, he used to receive previous intimation of her design, that

he might keep out of the way; one reason for which, was to avoid the attention of the audience to their countenances on such an occasion. Another reason might be, her own confusion at the thoughts of meeting the eyes of a man once so near to her, and whom she had so cruelly injured.

D'Estiollles, since his return to Paris, finding himself thus deprived of a wife, as soon as his passion for her had cooled and subsided, thought himself at full liberty to pursue elsewhere the indulgence of an appetite, he could no longer lawfully satisfy.

On this plan, which he might adopt the readier in the hopes of stunning his painful reflections, he plunged into the most dissolute course of life. Amply enabled by his fortune to gratify his

taste, he kept a number of mistresses, and the opera-girls especially had the benefit of his involuntary kind of divorce. Being satisfied that all his disorders would be placed to the account of his wife, as being originally the cause of them, he might, even out of revenge, take the greater pleasure in multiplying them.

In the mean time, madam de'Esti-
les, who had thus quitted her husband,
and an only daughter she had by him,
then a child, and was now the king's
declared mistress in all the forms, had
been successfully employed in rivetting
the chains of her royal lover. Abun-
dantly provided with art, she had
thoroughly studied his temper, his
humors, his inclination, and so per-
fectly conformed to them, that she

fixed him to her, by creating in him, a despair of finding another woman, with whom he could be so easy and happy.

From the vivacity of her penetration she soon felt out the king's weak side. She soon discovered, that of all the faculties of pleasing of which she was mistress, none would have greater power to hold him fast, than that of amusing him.

Kings have more hours of dulness than other men, from their having early exhausted the whole chapter of pleasures, through the facility of obtaining them, and the courtly assiduity of numbers, constantly employed, in springing them.

By these means, before they are half-way through life, few diversions can

have the merit of novelty. It must be a great genius for invention, who can procure them that satisfaction: and a greater one yet who can give to pleasures palled by repetition of enjoyment, the grace of novelty, from the art of constantly varying and reproducing them under a new form, and with higher seasoning. In both these points, of novelty and variety, Madam d'Eistiolles was sovereignly the king's woman.

Constitutionally impatient above all of the yawns of dullness pining for amusement, he could hardly have found another so capable as herself, of filling those dismal instants of vacuity, with which he was so miserably embarrassed. To all the graces of her person, and her acquisitions from educa-

tion, was added, that art so necessary at courts, the art of trifling.

The veriest bagatelles had the power of pleasing by her knack of treating them. No-body could tell a story or relate the little daily adventures of the court and town with more humour or a better grace.

She sung, she play'd upon most instruments in a masterly manner. She danced with all the lightness and air of a nymph, of which she had all the delicacy and freedom of shape. But that in which she most excelled was, the exact adapting and display of these accomplishments to the call of the moment. She took particular care to have done with them, the instant before that moment in which her exquisite discernment taught her they would cease to be

agreeable. Thus, by preventing weariness, she was sure not to lose the merit of all the entertainment she had precedently afforded

So many talents for pleasing, joined to the elegance of her taste, amply qualified her for filling the post of a Petronius Arbiter at that court. Though her rank, at the best, was but a kind of City-Cleopatra, or Cleopatre Bourgeoise, yet no pleasures were thought such that had not the stamp of her contrivance, or the sanction of her approbation: all of them were required to be a-la-Pompadour.

At those petits-soupers of which the king is so fond, where, laying aside all the stiffness of state, and unlacing royalty, he enjoys himself with a few select, rather at that time companions

and friends than subjects, no one more than herself contributed to animate and keep up the joy and spirit of the company. She was a vital principle of those little parties.

The king, in short, had so many reasons to feel that she was necessary to the pleasure of this life, that he had no temptation to an inconstancy he was aware would create a not easily reparable gap in it.

Deeply impressed with a grateful and tender sense of all that she was to him, he thought no marks of favor too much for her. The Bourbons have been often known to be expensive through ostentation, and sometimes lavish through love, but generosity was never their attribute. The present monarch is no exception to this general character of his family.

Naturally parcimonious he had not very royally rewarded the favors of his former mistresses. It was reserved for the superior influence of madam d'Estiolles to unlock the sluices of his liberality, and they were poured out in a full flood upon her and hers.

He presently gave her a marquissate, with the title of the marchioness of Pompadour, with which she had the modesty to assume the arms of that marquissate.

Charles Poisson, who was her brother, at least by the safe side, and who had not the shadow of any other pretention to notice, than the circumstance of being her brother, was created marquis de Vandieres; on which the courtiers, playing on the word, called him *Le marquis d'Avantbier*, which

may be nearest, though not literally, translated by *the marquis of yesterday*. The sense is nearly retained, though with the loss of the pun, a loss that will hardly be esteemed a great one. Yet trivial as the jest undoubtedly was, it was probably to elude its sting, that he soon after took the title of *marquis de Marigny*, in virtue of a *marquisate* of that name which the king's bounty enabled him to purchase. He was before made *super-intendant* of the king's buildings, gardens, arts, academies and manufactures; a post of great importance and emoluments. All which favors could bring no great dignity with them, considering the nature of the interest through which they came.

The good-man Poisson, the father,

could not help saying, "As to my
" daughter, she has wit, she is pretty,
" she may deserve the king's notice;
" but as for his doing so much for such
" a worthless blockhead as my son
" Charles, in good faith! it is un-
" pardonable."

But even the king himself, with all
his fondness for the sister, could not re-
frain his raillery upon this upstart bro-
ther of her's.

As some of the court were talking
before him of the next promotion to
the blue ribbon, and naming this
young *Poisson* as one that was expected
would be included in it, he said, *Non!*
c'est un trop petit Poisson pour le metre
au bleu. "No! he is too small a
" fish for blue sauce." Those who do
not understand French enough to know

that *Poisson* is a *fish*, and that *mettre au bleu*, is one of the ways of dressing the larger sort in France, will lose the jest entirely; which however can hardly pass but, in compliment to the king. So bad a jest from any one else, could never have been thought worth repeating.

The king was now entered into the giving strain with her, which might be one of the reasons to him, as it is to many others, for continuing to give, especially to low persons, with whom, without that continuance, all the merit of what was before given is presently lost. One gift then became only the pledge and wiredraw of another. But considering the disproportion of his profusions to the object on which it fell, it could not but have rather the

air of the weakness of a passion than of the royal virtue of generosity. It was a river poured down a sink.

His privy-purse was entirely at her command, of which she profitted without measure or mercy. For besides the expensiveness of the system of life into which she had engaged him, she drew from him what sums she pleased, independent of the unbounded traffic she made of her favor and influence, by her procurement of employs, posts, jobbs, and other beneficial emanations from the royal authority.

It was then believed, and hath since been verified, that, by this means, she had accumulated a prodigious fortune, part of which was said to be lodged in most of the banks of Europe, and part was more apparent, by being vested in buildings and purchases of lands.

She purchased a palace at Paris, called the Hotel d'Evreux, near the Thuilleries, which not being good enough for her, she pulled down and rebuilt it almost from the ground. This did not cause a little heart-burning to the Parisians, at seeing the palace of a prince converted to the use of a king's mistress, and that mistress taken, as it were, from the lees of the people.

When the placard or frontel inscribed with the name of the old hotel was taken down to make room for the new one of madam de Pompadour, there were a thousand pasquils, virulent couplets and farcasms, stuck on the walls of the buildings, expressing the sense of the people.

Nor was their rage a little exasperat-

ed by the circumstance of a large parcel of ground being, on this occasion, taken in, towards enlarging the gardens, out of the *cours*; a place so called from its serving for the nobility and gentry's taking the air in coaches, much as was once the fashion here at the Ring in Hyde-park. This they looked on as robbing the public; and, though it was authorized by the royal grant, it did not hinder the mob from gathering and insulting the workmen, at their work of raising the walls that were to inclose this encroachment. Nor could they have gone on with it, if a detachment of the guards had not been posted to protect them.

She had also acquired a superb hotel at Versailles, not for herself, for she had apartments even in the palace, but for her numerous retinue.

The king, besides, gave her the royal palace of Cressy for life, which occasioned great murmuring among all orders of people, at the indignity of such a mis-application of part of the domain.

He also, on a fancy that suddenly took madam de Pompadour, built her a magnificent seat, or pleasure-house, called *Bellevue*, from the delightfulness of the prospect, which had, it seems, excited her desire to have a house there, just on the road to Versailles, near Seve and Meudon. Here too, in order to form the gardens, several proprietors of lands were despotically compelled to part with them, much against their will, and at the price fixed on them. An oppression that could not but aggravate the resentment of a public, al-

ready not overpleased with the sums wantonly squandered upon her.

But difficult as it must seem for a mistress to be thus constantly receiving, and squeezing her keeper, without any sign of a mercenary or interested disposition escaping her, that difficulty, the superior art and genius of la Pompadour conquered.

Naturally of a supple, insinuating temper, joined to all the talents that go to making a good comedian, a fine genius, in short, for a court; any character she chose to act, appeared so unaffected and natural as not to betray the least suspicion of its being more than acted; for her art was too refined to have its effects ruined, by letting itself be seen: without seeming to ask for any thing, she obtained every thing. Never was the

game of disinterestedness better played—without prejudice, be it understood, to interest. But if her love for the king was not feigned, or at least much exaggerated, she was but the more justly accusable of a meanness unknown to that passion where it is real, that of laying the person she loved under unmerciful contributions, besides taking the advantage of his weakness to draw things from him, that must be hurtful to his reputation. Neither had she, in excuse of so gross an inconsistency, the plea of ignorance. Of the nature of her own motives, of her own motions, she could not be insensible; and the loud voice of the public, which could not but reach her, must have informed her of all the mischiefs she was doing him, if she could herself be supposed not to

know it. But she had not, it seems, more of delicacy than just the surface necessary to save the appearances of her not wanting it at bottom; nor any love that could interfere with the gaining those ends of the king, which she never might perhaps have gained, if its being more sincere, had left her less liberty of mind for the exertion of art. Sheer sentiment and love for his person were the disguise used by her; a disguise, which, stale as it is, still rarely fails, from the self-love of the person on whom it is employed meeting the deception above half way.

Kings, above all men, are liable to this imposition. One would think they were born to be the bubbles of every kind of flattery, that of others and their own. In point especially of love, there

is nothing of which they are so jealous as of their rank sharing their successes with their personal merit, and in nothing are they so apt to be egregiously deceived.

The king, however, proceeded more and more to intangle himself with madam de Pompadour, not only through habit, but from the favors he accumulated on her, and which, with the usual effect of favors, on the conferring side, endeared her the more to him. Versailles, as every one knows, is one of the most superb palaces in Europe, but proportionably the least lodgeable, as if its magnificence could not have existed, but at the expence of its conveniency. Nothing can be less commodiously contrived than the distribution of the apartments, of which there

are also a great scarcity. The queen and daughters of France are not themselves lodged extremely at large; but even the principal officers of the court are wretchedly accommodated in that respect; some of them are forced to take up with *entresoles* hardly superior to garrets. But the apartments of madam de Pompadour were scarce inferior to those of the king himself, being on the ground-floor directly under his; his bed-chamber communicating immediately with her's by a private back stair-case; so that they could come to one another without passing through any outer-room.

In the mean time, such high marks of distinction, joined to so unbounded a profusion, created the person on whom they were conferred, a number

of enemies. Envy alone, at a court, would have operated that effect, and perhaps more strongly yet, if the merit of the subject had contributed to exalt its virulence. But on this occasion, there were many motives for discontent that might fairly be owned. If the scandal was not much at a court, familiarized to such examples; the ignobleness of the object, and the excess of favors poured forth upon so obscure a family, could not but alarm and indispose many, but none so much as the most zealous well-wishers to the king. Even that insipid herd of courtiers who scarce dare call their opinion their own, enslaved as it is to a master from whom they receive orders what it shall be, had that pride of theirs, which is so consistent with the utmost

meanness, hurt by their being obliged to creep to a creature of fancy, late so much their inferior. Not daring however to speak out, they revenged themselves of the restraint, by redoubling their secret detestations and contempt of her, and of all her noble family at her tail. The dissatisfaction, in short, was general; and madam de Pompadour, even in the infancy of her power, and before her ascendant was so well established, as it since has been, had like to have been the victim of the rising storm. As the occasion was extremely singular, and made a great noise, at the time, it cannot be improper to particularize it here.

There was one madam Sauvé, wife to a clerk in the office of monsieur d'Argenson, secretary at war: she was

a subaltern to madam de Tallard, governess to the duke of Burgundy, the dauphin's eldest son, then an infant.

On a particular day, that this young prince was shown to the people, who came in great concourse to see him; this madam Sauvé was in waiting. The child was placed in a cradle on the inside of a balustrade, to defend it from the inconveniency or danger of the croud, pressing too close upon it. As soon as the room was cleared, Sauvé approaching the cradle, as she took the prince out, gave a skream, occasioned by a packet sealed up, which she said she found there. It was directed to the king, and being delivered to madam de Tallard, the governess, she immediately carried it to him. On being opened it was found to contain

some grains of corn, allusive to the scarcity that then reigned; and a letter full of bitter expostulations with the king on his mis-government, and on his scandalous attachment to la Pompadour; not without threats even of a second Ravallac, if he did not reform his conduct and take more care of his people.

The king was greatly shocked at this, not so much from the tenor of the letter itself, as at the manner of its conveyance.

La Pompadour knew herself detested by monsieur d'Argenson among others. He had been so careless of concealing his sentiments of her, or rather so open in the declaration of them, that the wonder was, how he could hold his place, as it were in de-

fiance of her power with the king. Her suspicion then instantly landed upon him, which she did not fail of communicating to the king. Nor were there wanting circumstances to countenance it. D'Argenson's enmity to her was manifest. Madam Sauvé was not only the wife of one of his clerks, but was suspected of being his mistress. In short, she so far inclined the king to believe that he was at the bottom of this mystery, that he threw out hints of the deepest resentment against d'Argenson.

But the very broaching this suspicion against a minister in such high credit had like to have been fatal to her own favor. The queen, the ministers, almost the whole court, in short, took side against her. It was but one

cry with them, that the whole affair was an artifice of her own; executed by some obscure agent of hers, and levelled at a man who had no fault, unless thinking no better of her than she deserved, could be called an error. The king, even with all his partiality for her, was staggered with the unanimity and vehemence of the clamour against her.

Madam Sauvé, who found or pretended to find the packet, had been narrowly examined. Her answers only increased the perplexity. Interrogated how it was possible for such a thing to be conveyed into a cradle defended by a balustrade, on the inside of which herself stood near it, without her marking and seeing the person; she replied, that she had felt her hand

squeezed at the instant she supposed the packet was slipped in, but that, in so great a concourse, she looked on it only as an action of some person willing to approach the cradle as near as possible, or perhaps thrust involuntary towards her, and catching at any thing to save himself: but had she been aware of any thing extraordinary, the motion was so quick, and the croud so fluctuating, that she could neither distinguish persons nor faces.

To this it was opposed, that so strange a circumstance as this of having her hand squeezed, must alarm her enough to cry out on the instant, which it seems she did not, even if she had not the presence of mind to distinguish the person, and to call the guards, at hand, to secure him.

This, however, might have passed, if her subsequent conduct had not strengthened the growing suspicion of her being concerned in the fact. The very night of the day on which this accident happened, as she was going to bed, she told her maid, that she was sure that the person who had conveyed the packet into the cradle, would never be easy, till he had her life, from the apprehension he might be under that some time or other, she should know him again, and have him seized: that she should spare him the trouble of making away with her, and herself all further terrors about it, by taking poison.

The maid said every thing she thought proper to dissuade her from so wild and causeless a project, and La

Sauvé pretended to have renounced it. But as soon as the maid had left her, she swallowed some poison, but not in a dose sufficient to dispatch herself, which does not indeed appear to have been her intention.

The poison she had taken, working some effect, she groaned and cried out so that the maid returned, who finding what she had done, alarmed all within call. Upon this, proper help was immediately sent for, and counter-poison enough given to her, to defeat the effect of more than she had really taken. Any danger of her life then was soon out of the question.

But there appeared in all this something so over-acted, so much of grimace, that the suspicions thickened against her. She was accordingly

taken into custody and sent to the Bastille, from which she never came out. Nor is it known what examination she underwent in that prison of the state-inquisition, what tortures were used, what discoveries were made, or whether she was privately executed or not. What is certain is, that she has not been heard of since. Her husband Sauvé had fled on the first notice of her being apprehended, but returned some time after, on being amply justified. It may be presumed, however, that d'Argenson was entirely innocent, since the cloud that had hung over him was presently dispelled, and himself, at least to all appearance, restored to the king's former confidence. But if la Pompadour was any ways guilty, as it would be perhaps too

great a refinement, of conjecture whet-
 ted by prejudice, to suppose she was,
 the smothering the process against la
 Sauv , and her own continuance in
 favor, could only be accounted for by
 that prodigious ascendant she had ob-
 tained over the king, who might not
 therefore be willing to expose or to
 punish her, and had not the power to
 renounce her. Such a weakness, how-
 ever, is so incredible, especially as it
 must be joined to so much injustice,
 that one would, of the two, rather in-
 cline to think la Pompadour innocent
 of the scheme.

But, as if this storm had only shaken
 her to fix her the firmer, no sooner
 was it blown over, than the king ap-
 peared more infatuated with her than
 ever. The court was soon given to

understand the extent of her influence. She alone could make fair or foul weather in that region. No offence was more severely resented, than any mark of disrespect to the woman whom the king delighted to honor.

She had also more than a common cause of triumph and self-congratulation for having put the conquest of the king on a solid footing, by the discovery she had made of the only effectual way there was for her to preserve it.

It is a great pity that for the ease and happiness of society, that secret of hers, provided it should not be, like hers, abused, was not more common in practice than it is. Whatever danger the men might be exposed to from it, the women would be gainers

by it. This secret then, was no other, than on hitting the king's particular humour, by studiously conforming to it, to make him find a greater pleasure in her company than with any one, or any where, else. Neither are great beauty or great wit so requisite to secure this point, as the wisdom of sacrificing to complaisance that selfish spirit, through which in little humours, and silly passions, one's own satisfaction is preferred to that of others. A sacrifice oftenest sure to be repaid with more lasting and much greater advantages than that of what is vulgarly called, and more vulgarly practised, having one's own way.

Of the soundness of this theory, la Pompadour was, by having adhered to it in practice, enabled to boast a

victorious experience. She had not lived many years with the king, in quality of his mistress, in the most extensive sense of that word, before she was disqualified from discharging what is commonly thought the most essential function of it, occasioned by a disorder which had grown upon her to such a height, that the king was forced to abstain from any intimate approaches to her, by the advice of his physicians, who represented them, as not even exempt from danger to his health. Difficult as it might be to the king to wean himself from her embraces, no constancy of desire could however well be proof against this double infrigidation of her personal infirmity, and of the fear of its consequences to himself. In this critical situation, it was, that la Pom-

padour had to triumph on her not having solely trusted to any thing so perishable as the attraction of her person. She was now to reap the benefit of her having taken care to secure her hold, by such a multiplicity of chains, that even so great a one snapping, could not restore him to his freedom. The whole court, and not improbably herself, were surprised to see she could keep possession of the king, in circumstances so fit to cool and disgust him. Many motives, however, might concur to fix him; his predominant passion for amusement, by none so well gratified as by her; the old circle, with princes, of favor begetting gifts, those gifts still greater favor, that favor again further gifts, and so on to the end of the chapter; habit; the spirit

of contradiction, finding a kind of joy in disappointing the conclusions of numbers; the singularity of the thing; and perhaps, above all, that false pride of the human heart, so often breeding a persistence in errors, from the renunciation implying a confession of them, and by which it is so silly as to be grievously hurt. All these weaknesses, for such they all are, combined together, might, without too much occasion for wonder, account for his not having strength enough to break loose. No symptoms of remission betrayed such a design. On the contrary, he now appeared more enslaved than ever.

Monfieur de Maurepas, who had, among others, presumed on this accident to her person, operating its most

probable effect, was one of the first victims of this opinion. He was not only a minister of state, but one of the most high favored ones; having been as it were bred up with the king, and taken into the administration before he was scarce of age. Upon a certain festival that la Pompadour had sent the king the compliment of a nose-gay of white roses; this circumstance was, among the news of the day, told to Maurepas at his table, where there was a numerous company; upon which, in a flow of spirits from wine and convenient joy, he produced an extempore epigram, in which there was rather less of delicacy, than of wit, and indeed, not much of that, as it was merely a play of words to the white hue of the flowers, the very mention

of which would, for its violation of decency, be unpardonable, but for its being historically true, that this wretched trifle could produce the disgrace of a minister of state, of his importance.

A copy of the lines having been carried to la Pompadour, to whom no outrage could have been more stinging, nor more personal, she was incensed at it beyond measure, and had influence enough with the king to make him enter into her resentment.

Maurepas, lost, at once, both place and favor, nor ever recovered them, no part of the king's character being more established, than that of his never returning to those he has once left. Chauvelin, a very capable minister, and purely in complaisance to cardinal Fleuri, by him dismissed, though he

had a great esteem for him, had been before one instance of that inflexibility of his. Not even Chauvelin's plainly proving afterwards, how greatly in the right he had been, could ever procure a revocation of his disgrace.

But as it was necessary to give some color to so violent a step as that of discarding Maurepas, and as the true motive of it could not well bear being told, a pretext was set up of some malversation and negligence of his in the marine department. But the public, admitting there was some truth in the charge, conceived only the more indignation at so good a reason's not having produced that dismissal which was reserved for a compliment to la Pompadour's private pique and animosity. So true it is too, that, in courts, men

are not so often the victims of their vices as of their virtues, and a hatred for la Pompadour passed for one. Neither was this the only, by many, examples of the danger of offending her. Monsieur de Resselier, a knight of Malta, and officer in the guards, had wrote four virulent lines, in which taking her for his text, he had so little spared the king's weakness for her, that his punishment for being the author of them, might have plausibly enough been as much attributed to his having attacked his majesty, as his majesty's mistress; had not the king himself openly made a merit to her, of his disclaiming on this occasion any revenge but hers. The sense of these lines was, "that a king who could debase himself so much as to pick out the very

"meanest object on the earth, for the
 "placing his affection on, could be
 "capable of nothing but meannesses."
 The suspicion falling violently upon
 Resselier of his being the author of
 them, guards were sent, at a time that
 he was from home, to his apartment,
 when, upon ransacking it, they found
 the original foul draught, blotted with
 here and there erazements, and altera-
 tions in his own hand, that proved the
 lines to be of his composing. Had
 there been only a fair copy found,
 though of his own writing, it would
 have been no proof, as he might have
 pleaded its being only a copy, or taken
 down upon memory. As it was, he
 was condemned for life to the cage at
 Mount St. Michael, in Normandy.
 This cage is a method of imprisonment,

renewed by the tyranny of Lewis the eleventh, after it had been long abolished by disuse; the antient prisons, in the time of the Gauls, having been originally nothing but temporary cages. This is of wood and iron, of about eight foot square every way, so that the prisoner is extremely cramped in it for room. One unfortunate man, in Lewis the fourteenth's time, having been kidnapped out of Holland, by some emissaries of that prince, languished in it for above thirty years, happy that, in the latter part of the time, this ill-usage and despair drove him out of his senses.

His crime was some reflections on the French ministry, and of which it was probably the truth that gave the greatest offence. To this barbarous punish-

ment, compared to which death would have been a mercy, was Resselier condemned : and in this irksome condition he was detained seven years, and then had no mitigation, but what was obtained for him by the intercession of the order of Malta, through which he was at length transferred to the dismal prison of Pierre Encise, but where he could however enjoy more liberty of his limbs. Here he had not been long before la Pompadour, satisfied as she might well be with what he had suffered, piqued herself upon generosity forsooth ; and procured his release, with leave to return to Malta. His preferment in the army was lost. It is said, that before he quitted the kingdom, he waited upon la Pompadour to return her thanks ; a step that would

almost rob him of the pity raised by all that he had endured. But what is there that may not be believed of the servility of the subjects of that nation?

But though la Pompadour was thus become, in a very material sense, an invalid, and disqualified for the king's chamber-service; she made so little allowance for this circumstance as to give herself the air of being jealous of the king. Any shew or appearance of liking in him to another woman, gave her the greatest uneasiness, though she took care to conceal it from him. When madam de Brionne came to court for the first time, and, as it was imagined, not quite without design of pleasing the king, he could not keep his eyes off her, and said, with some emotion, at supper before la Pompadour, that he

did not think he had ever seen a more beautiful woman. This alarmed her; and, to prevent, in time, the consequences, she had a hint underhand conveyed to the prince Charles of Lorraine, (not the emperor's brother) of the danger there was to be apprehended to the virtue of his nephew monsieur de Brionne's wife. The prince, who was one of the old rigorists in point of honor, did not give himself a moment's rest, till he had managed, so as to make his nephew hurry madam de Brionne from court immediately.

But the triumph of her influence, manifestly appeared the greatest in the treatment it procured from the king, to a daughter of the dutchess de Chateauroux, for whom he had (as has been observed) a distinguished af-

fection. When this young lady (who had) succeeded to her mother's titles, she came to Versailles; the apprehension her appearance gave to the reigning favorite, was so great, that she made a point of her meeting with such a cold reception, as should be a hint to her of her not being a welcome visitor at court. The king weakly enough complied with her insistence on so unreasonable a procedure.

La Pompadour, however, in the just fear of the reins slipping out of her hands, if she did not occasionally slacken them, knew how to temper her power with more condescension, where she was less alarmed with the danger of losing it. A young lady of great quality and beauty, whose real name would add nothing to the merit of the

story, and whom we shall call Cecilia, had, like many others, laid herself out to supplant her. To this project she had been encouraged by some advances and flattering distinctions, shewn her by the king, who was really taken with her person. Her repulses, her coyness, were, however, too visibly affected for him not to see through the drift of them, a premeditated design of becoming his mistress in form. In this spirit she had received his addresses, and the resistance she opposed to his desires, having the usual effect of inflaming them the more, made him the more eager to know her terms of capitulation. They were not very moderate ones. A great settlement for herself, advantages for her family, the removal of some persons from court, were among the

preliminaries; but the *sine qua non* condition of the treaty, was, specifically, the banishment of madam Pompadour; which she required should be immediate, and as a pledge to her for the performance of all the other articles. This was a point which the king had not the least intention to give up to her in reality, at the same time that he wished not to miss the possession of an object, whose charms had raised his desires to a pitch that had made the dilemma rather perplexing.

In this distress, he has recourse to madam de Pompadour herself, whose love, if ever sincere, was now mellowed into what she calls friendship, that sacred name with which she covered the complaisance of ambition and interest. Never then at a loss for expedients,

where acting a comedian's part would do the business, she herself suggested to the king the artifices of a sham disguise: agreeing it so, that his majesty should take an opportunity of treating her with such an air of coolness, as, being properly reported, and coming to Cecilia's ears, might lull her diffidence, and hasten the accomplishment of the treaty. La Pompadour, fully satisfied that there was more danger, to her, from Cecilia's holding out, than from her yielding, was not in the least alarmed at the superficial impression the mere external charms of that lady had made on the king, whose confidence in consulting herself, in the means of bringing her to his point, had, at once, added to her security, and inspired her with the counsel she

gave him, and which he punctually followed.

The concerted scene of a coolness was acted with all imaginable success; and la Pompadour, to give it the greater force, not only retired from the court, in such a seeming discontent, as portended a thorough rupture, but paid a visit, just at that time, to the Capuchin-nuns. These incidents combining with the report now universally diffused of the king's new inclination, were full sufficient to make la Pompadour's disgrace believed indubitable. One would have imagined that the public itself had acted in concert with the king and his mistress, to deceive the credulous Cecilia: so readily did it swallow and so much exaggerate every thing that could favor the deception:

it went so far as even to invent and circulate the edifying discourses of the supposed discarded favourites, with the superior of the nuns, of whom it was said she had bespoken a cell, and given directions for her accommodation in the convent. Nothing was talked of but of her furnishing a second volume of la Valiere's retreat; how different however the subjects! Though la Pompadour's disorder had made, in some degree, nun's flesh of her, there was nothing, in fact, of which she had less, than the spirit of that vocation. Yet poor Cecilia became completely the bubble and the victim of this paltry collusion.

Hurried away by her exultation on her imaginary triumphs, and without standing to examine its solidity, she

made, in the simplicity of her heart, the sacrifice of herself, with much more good faith than it was received. Having exacted no other security for the rest of her demands, than this removal of la Pompadour, which she had too lightly taken for granted, on the faith of appearances so liable to caution, she trusted to the power of her charms, and surrendered them without further ceremony.

The next morning she rose from the king's bed, who had the good or ill nature to leave her in full possession of that fool's paradise, which her imagination had created for her. The favourite mistress banished, herself succeeding to her plenitude of power, and the court at her feet, were the great ideas that filled her little head. She

could very easily account for the king's not seeing her the whole day; nor when, in the evening, on her appearing in her rank, in the presence-chamber, the king came up to her, and with the coolest politeness spoke to her of indifferent matters, as if nothing extraordinary had passed between them, did she attribute this to any thing but an excess of discretion, from which her vanity would, perhaps, have gladly dispensed him; when lo! all on a sudden, la Pompadour coming in, and addressing herself to his majesty, with her usual familiarity! This theatrical stroke unravelled all the plot, and opened Cecilia's eyes on the ridiculous part she had been drawn in to play, for the diversion, and even for the benefit of a woman she detested, and

who was, at that instant, enjoying a confusion, it was impossible for her entirely to conceal, as much of the courtier as she was. This adventure, which the marchioness took care should not be sunk upon the public, did her the service of a warning in future to the candidateship for the royal handkerchief, not to include her removal among their articles of surrender.

In the mean time la Pompadour, not content with accumulating treasures, with all the rapaciousness natural to the condition out of which she had been taken ; the wife of a farmer of the revenue, began every day more and more to betray the meanness of her original, by exactly that sort of pride and vanity which so strongly characterizes it. There were no airs of insolence she did

not give herself. With too much sense not to be conscious of every thing that was against her, she had not however enough to see that the character of king's mistress, repairing nothing, only made every thing that was against her more notorious: she did not see that all the pains she should take to screw herself up to a height above contempt would only make her the more inviting mark for it. These reflections were either above her making, or were subordinate to the native littleness of her passions.

It would be endless here to produce all the instances of her arrogance, that so often provoked the secret scorn and derision of the court, but of none more than those who humored it, by their most court-like compliance. A few of the most glaring ones may suffice.

In proof of the high idea she was grown to entertain of herself, and of her dignity, one point of state she took upon her, was the suffering no stool or chair besides her own elbow-one in her dressing-room, where she received company sitting at her toilette. By special grace, indeed, whenever his majesty did her the honor of a visit, there was another produced for him. Or if princes of the blood, cardinals, or some of those very high personages, on whom she could not well hope to pass such treatment, as that of receiving them sitting without offering them a chair, she vouchsafed to admit them, herself standing till they were gone. The marquis de Souvrê, however, who was not, it seems, of that excepted rank, waiting upon her at her toilette,

and finding no chair for his accommodation, very familiarly clapped himself down on one of the elbows of hers, and continued the conversation, lolling by the side of her ; she inwardly fuming and broiling all the while. This unparalleled outrage, as she construed it, she instantly complained of to the king, who took the first opportunity of calling the marquiss to an account for it. “ Faith ! said he, I was devilishly “ fatigued, and seeing no where to sit “ down, I even made the best shift I “ could.” The cavalier easy air of his excuse made the king laugh ; and he being a kind of privileged favorite, hindered any further notice being taken ; otherwise he might have learned to his cost, what it was to sit upon the elbow of la Pompadour’s chair.

Nor was this the only mortification she met with on this very account. The count de Charolois, who despised this low insolent creature of favor, and his brother, the count de Clermont, much more, for his meanness in paying any court to her, happening to be in her chamber, and seeing no seat to receive him, except this solitary chair, which was consecrated to la Pompadour, he threw himself into it without farther ceremony, leaving her to stand if she pleased, or to send for another, saying withal, "that he saw no-body there
"with so good a title to fill it as him-
"self." La Pompadour was, in consideration of his superiority of rank, forced to swallow this bitter pill, for which she would have had rather to thank the count, if it had operated so

as to purge her vanity. But that disease of hers was incurable.

She affected also the princely air of having a gentleman-usher. In this employ she entertained one monsieur Dinville, a nobleman of one of the best and most antient families in Guyene. This puzzled the world to decide which was greatest, her insolence or his meanness.

She had in her service one Collin, a kind of steward or clerk of the kitchen, whom she did not think of distinction enough to wait upon her in that capacity, unless his person was decorated with some order. Such an idea would have entered into the head of few real born princesses. This point she soon carried, by her interest with the king, to have him made one of the comptrollers of the royal and military order of

St. Lewis, which institution was peculiarly designed for those officers who should serve with distinction, or acquire a certain title to it from seniority in the army or navy. Collin, never known but for a menial servant, could not consequently have the least qualification. But this office of comptroller, not indeed making him a knight of St. Lewis, has the same effect of giving him the privilege of wearing the cross and insignia of that order. So that to all appearance (and with la Pompadour appearance ever stood at least equivalent to reality) she could have to stand behind her chair, with a napkin tucked under his arm, a knight of St. Lewis with his cross dangling. If she had taken a spite to the order, and meant to explode it by such a disgrace,

it was no bad way of effecting it; just as the French government, to put down the fashion of callicoes, ordered, upon a time, the hangman to wear them, in his office at the gallows.

It was probably with the like view of keeping some measures with the public decorum, that her brother, Marigny, was made secretary of the order of the Holy-Ghost, the highest order of honor in that kingdom.

The princesses of France have ladies to attend them, under the name of Dame de Compagnié, or Lady-companions: La Pompadour not daring, in quite so bold a strain, to erect herself into a princess, created a new title for two of her domestics, whom she called her Dames de Confidence, or Confidentes. These were pretty much

in the stile of those tragedy-chambermaids, introduced in the first act, that the audience may learn, by the bye, what is necessary to be foreknown of the plot, from a princess telling her dame de confidence what the wonder should be that she did not know before. They served her, in short, as in quality of toad-eaters.

But while we laugh at la Pompadour's thus burlesquing majesty, and playing at *Queen I am*, it would not be fair to suppress some circumstances that may candidly serve to take off the ridicule, by throwing a just part of it on those whose meanness had encouraged her arrogance.

To such as do not know the spiritless servility, especially of French courtiers, it would be incredible that men of birth

and rank could stoop to humour this low insolence of pretensions in her. For one nobleman that disdained to pay a court to her, there were hundreds that knuckled to this little creature of the royal fancy, and who held themselves abundantly acquitted by a direction of their intention, in the respect they payed her, to the king. "Le Roi"—Le Roi is such a fine mouthfull, and, commonly, by a Frenchman pronounced with such a ridiculously fulsome emphasis as would nauseate, I will not say a man of sense, as that would be too much in course; I will not say a free Briton, as that might appear too partial, but even the monarch himself, who is thus set up for the *but* of such servility, if he could conceive the indignity of the insult of-

ferred to his understanding, of its being imagined pleasing to him: And yet it is this senseless cant-word of *Le Roi, oui messieurs, le roi!* that serves to bridle these poor people, and awe them into their abject submissiveness to the exactions and oppressions of their government. This really provokes pity, but it must excite a laugh to hear some of the courtiers, in talking to one another, call him *notre cher maitre*, with much such a tone and air, as the girls, in that country, call their mother, *notre chere mere*, with this difference, that, in their hearts, they have neither love nor esteem for him. The truth is, they are more attached to the sound, than to the substance; to the word, than to the thing. It is plainly, in the empty name of king, that the whole of this real, or

affected veneration of the subjects of that nation centers; since it makes little or no difference how the post is filled. There adulation makes no distinction. Thus their kings are unfortunate enough to be obliged to keep their errors for want of loyalty, and spirit enough in their subjects, to let them see their disapprobation. But what is it a pure courtier will not stoop to for his interest? Some, those of the most distinguished personages of France, great by birth, great by rank, however little by character, stooped so low, as to make la Pompadour their channel of application to the king. The venerable Belleisle had not disdained to pay a very mean court to her. Monsieur Paisceux, secretary of state,

for foreign affairs, went even so far as to intimate to the foreign ambassadors, and ministers at the French court, that it would be proper for them to pay their visits, both of form and business, to the omnipotent marchioness.

Nor could it be a wonder that the corps diplomatique should take such a hint, when the queen of Hungary herself, on our treaty with Russia's driving her into the arms of France, made the decorum of majesty yield to the exigencies of policy, and condescended to cultivate the favour of one, whose influence was so powerful at Versailles. A correspondence was set on foot, in which la Pompadour gave to the empress, the familiar appellation of *ma chere reine* (my dear queen) and received in return that of

ma petit reigne (my little queen) a title not entirely a false one, since the marchioness had palpably usurped the principal functions and power of the lawful consort of his majesty. She also sent the empress a present of her picture, in a frame, which, as it cost above a hundred thousand livres, might with some propriety be called the gilding of the pill.

Nor, in truth, if the circumstance be well considered, can that strain of condescension, in the empress-queen, so justly celebrated, for her spirit and firmness in a number of instances, be intirely condemned. It was less her fault than that of the weakness of the French court, and of the unaccountable politics of the British. If there ever was a maxim which might

be truly called a national one, a maxim, by which our friends and enemies might regulate their judgment of what they had to hope or fear from us, it was incontestably a compact union between the house of Austria and the British nation ; a compact only the less likely to be violated, for its being so virtually implicit, in the nature of things. There was no necessity for its being express'd, like the famous family compact. Unfortunately for Britain, the system of the court was in such an opposition to that of the country, that our being parties in the war on the continent, was the cabinet point to be carried at any rate. This point was the more difficult, for that the nation in general was clearly enlightened as to its true interest, in having nothing

to do with the continental embroils. Happy! if it had continued, in that wise disposition. But the court, bent on having its measure pass, and those measures so egregiously false, that they were designed to promote, and to bring into existence the very evils which they were alledged necessary to prevent, obtained among other inconsistencies, that fatal mis-alliance of ours with Prussia; a new alliance that must render every success possible to be obtained by us, in the course of our natural naval war, of little or no advantage, if not even ultimately destructive to us. The means of the court's gaining this victory over the public good sense, were intirely worthy of the policy of the end proposed. The majesty of the throne was debased

so low, as to have recourse to a political adventurer, to impose on the people, and the court, stickled for the very man who had risen into notice and consequence, by having opposed it with the taste of the times, was unhappily no better than to take for eloquence ! Upon the court's coming up to his terms, he undertook a task under which any genius but his own must have sunk, that of a conduct diametrically opposed to those maxims, the maintenance of which, had gained him his popularity, which he now nobly turned against the people, in putting the broad seal of his front to that alliance, in which their interest, and the queen of Hungary, were so palpably sacrificed. A series of successes which afterwards followed, especially upon that element

where they were rather matters of course, than of any the least merit to a man who demonstrably, I repeat it, demonstrably, without any more share in them, than the lowest clerk in any of the public offices, was graciously pleased to accept the compliment of their attribution to him, those successes, I say, fatally prolonged the reign of that illusion, under which the public had acquiesced in our defection from our ardent ally, and in our support of a prince, without doubt naturally, and at bottom, a well wisher to the French, if not in actual collusion with them.

The queen of Hungary, however, whose conduct towards this nation had been incontestably irreproachable in the just, the self-evident reasons she had alledged for not joining us openly,

till the Russian succours, originally negotiated by Britain against Prussia, should enable her to do it without the fear of being crushed by the presumable union of France and Prussia. The queen, I say, shocked, as she well might be, at a procedure so unnatural, in the British court, as that of allying with a power at once her enemy, and, politically speaking, surely the friend of France, and which she might well be excused for not having expected, could not help turning her eyes towards an enemy from whom she could not well meet with worse treatment than from her antient ally; and under the pressure of such a dilemma there can be very little wonder, if, in the necessity of negotiating with the court of France, she subordinated punctilios to

essentials of state, and chose that channel through which the business depending was likely to flow the smoothest and have the most favourable issue. Accordingly, la Pompadour not only highly honored with this application, but, withal, taught to think by those she consulted, that this overture might be of the greatest service to France, exerted her whole influence in favor of the empress-queen, and on the second of May, 1756, the treaty of alliance between the two courts, was concluded: a treaty much more unnatural than that which had preceded it on the sixteenth of January, between Britain and Prussia, and which might with perfect propriety have been scrawled on the white walls of a cell at Moorfields. But be that as it may, la Pom-

padour took great merit to herself, on the part she had assumed in the alliance of France with the court of Vienna, and had a medal on this occasion graved under her own direction, upon an agate-onyx, executed in the highest taste, by monsieur Guay.

Nor, to say the truth, was it quite without reason that la Pompadour valued herself on her share in a transaction, which even forms an epoch in the annals of Europe.

She had already some years before (in 1752) obtained, besides the honors of a dutchess, though without the title, the privileges of the tabouret, or stool to sit in the presence of the queen, to whom she was presented, to be embraced, in which consists the ceremony of investiture, or installation, though

certainly a stool of repentance would have been rather more proper. Nor indeed was this first part very decent for la Pompadour to ask, considering the light in which she must stand to the queen; who, out of her unbounded affection and complaisance to the king, made little or no opposition. Even the ETIQUETTE, or forms of the court, very rarely indeed allowing this distinction but to dutchesses, gave way to the paramount favor of the candidate, whose pretension was more over somewhat authorized by the precedent of madam de Montespan, mistress to Lewis the Fourteenth, who had obtained the like. It had also been urged, in mitigation of the objection to character, that she no longer kept up any criminal commerce with the king, and that his conversa-

tion with her being now reduced to the purely Platonic terms of friendship, any reason of that sort for her exclusion ceased in course. The involuntariness indeed of all this innocence, no one was so uncourtly as to mention, as it would not have greatly fortified the argument in her favor.

The triumph however did not come pure and unmixed to her. In the midst of it, she met with one of those mortifications, to which vanity is so liable, and which subscribe, at a court especially, infinite rejoycings when they do happen.

In the course of the ceremony she was presented to the dauphin, to receive his salute. The dauphin, who naturally enough detested her, as he tendered one side of his face to her to

kiss, lolled out his tongue, and winked with his eye, on the other. It was not possible for la Pompadour to see this, but she was presently after told of it. Bursting with rage, she flew to the king, painted this treatment of her in all the lively colors her emotion could furnish, and concluded with her being determined to leave the court rather than stay to be exposed to such intolerable insults. The king, incensed at his son's procedure, which he construed into an irreverence to himself, adopted her resentment; and the next day, as the dauphin was disposing himself to pay the devoir of a morning-visit to him, he received orders, to retire to his palace at Meudon. Upon this, the queen, the ministers, and numbers at court, interposed. The king however, would,

hearken to no intercession for a reconciliation, but on condition that the dauphin should personally go to la Pompadour, and in full circle disown his procedure. He submitted, and in a numerous presence declared to her, “that the report that had been made
“to her was a false one, and that he
“had not in the least behaved in the
“manner that had been told her.” She received this declaration like a most gracious princess, and answered him, with equal truth, that she had not believed a word of the matter. Thus ended this not uncomic scene. But the dauphin was blamed by many, as having too much debased himself in such an humiliation. They did not perhaps, enough consider his double duty of son and subject, so that what fault

there was in this step, could not be so great in him who obeyed, as in him who commanded. Nor, as it happened, did the merit of this submission intirely cancel the offence he had given; for though he was afterwards, even at la Pompadour's affected suggestion, admitted to all the outward honors of his birth, he never, to the day of his death, was suffered to have any material share of the royal authority.

La Pompadour having thus obtained the honors of the Louvre, this success did not so much satisfy, as encourage her to make a farther trial of her power. In the year 1756, a few months before the treaty of Versailles, she took it into her head to be Dame du Palais, or lady of the palace to the queen; a place which was never given but to

ladies of the highest distinction for birth, rank and character. The queen, as passive as her acquiescence had been in the affair of the Louvre, must however have been void of all sensibility, if she could have stomached her misfortune being as is were brought home to her, by this obtrusion of a person so offensive to her, into her household. Yet, consonant to the whole tenor of her complaisance (for every thing she knew was the king's desire, she made no objection, but such a one as she imagined, would be absolved to himself, by its affecting his honor and his conscience equally with her own)—waving then any other reasons, that, however just, might be only the more likely to displease for their being so, she represented mildly, but firmly,

" that it would be too crying an in-
 " decency for her to admit a per-
 " son into that station who could not
 " even approach the altar to take the
 " sacrament, whilst in a scandalous
 " state of separation from her husband.
 " That the circumstance of the in-
 " nocence of her present intimacy with
 " the king, of which she was satisfied,
 " did not in the least cure the wound
 " in la Pompadour's reputation, while,
 " though actually a married woman,
 " she lived as it were at large, and in
 " defiance of that duty of a wife,
 " who makes of her husband's house
 " her only proper home. That his
 " majesty might certainly order as he
 " thought fit, but she hoped, for his
 " own sake, that he would not put
 " such a slur upon his royal house, as

“to bring into it, in a station of such
“nice honor, a person so much under
“the censure of the church, as to be
“liable to a refusal from it of the
“common benefit of the Eastern-com-
“munion.”

The king, on the one hand tender of
either urging the queen too far, or of do-
ing any thing that might too much shock
established rules; and, on the other,
having nothing more at heart, than to
satisfy la Pompadour, was terribly
perplexed, and at a loss for some ex-
pedient to salve or surmount this ob-
jection of the queen's, of which he
felt all the force.

The queen adhered to it as the only
one she could have pitched upon, in
which the captiousness of malice itself
could not discover the least shadow of
the cavil of jealousy or offence to him.

La Pompadour, herself, with all her wit, was, at first, extremely much posed by this seemingly invincible dilemma.

If she continued in her state of divorce, which having been originally a criminal one, and was still irregular, she durst not present herself to the communion, for fear of being repulsed in a manner not the most agreeable; and, even had she succeeded, it would not have passed but for a gross and unpardonable sacrilege, suggested by ambition and executed by irreligion.

That way then the door was barred against her hopes. If again she returned to the little man her husband, they were equally annihilated. The mere

lady-wife of a d'Estiolles, could with no very good grace be a DAME DU PALAIS.

Then the confusion to which she was exposed by this disappointment of a pretension she was known by the whole court to have made, and the pleasure she knew that disappointment would give her enemies, did not a little increase her vexation. The king shared in it, the courtiers enjoyed it.

Yet, insuperable as this obstacle appeared, la Pompadour at length found means to vanquish it. She wrote a letter to her husband d'Estiolles, in the true Magdalen-style, of which this was the substance; "she assured him, that
"she had very sincerely repented of the
"injury done him, and of the disorder
"of her life. That all the most es-

“fential part of her wrong was ceased,
 “but that she wished all appearances
 “of it would cease too. That being
 “determined to atone for her past, by
 “her future conduct, she entreated
 “him to receive her again, and she
 “would thence-forward take care to
 “edify the world, by the union in
 “which she would live with him, as
 “much as she had scandalized it by her
 “separation.”

While she was writing this letter,
 and before it could be sent, the prince
 de Soubize went to d’Estiolles, and
 told him, “that, in about two hours
 “time, he would receive a letter from
 “la Pompadour, to the effect above
 “recited; that he was undoubtedly
 “the master of proceeding as he
 “pleased, since all authority was out

“ of the question ; as it was requisite
 “ that his answer should be perfectly a
 “ free one : but that, as a friend, he
 “ would advise him to reject the offer
 “ contained in the letter ; as, in his
 “ acceptance of it, he would certainly
 “ not make his court to the king, and
 “ that therefore it became him to
 “ weigh well what he did.”

To give the greater force to this
 counsel, he at the same time brought
 him the royal mandate for a very con-
 siderable augmentation of his emolu-
 ments in the revenue.

D’Estiolles, in whom time and re-
 flection had long brought his passion
 to reason, and consequently to great in-
 difference, if not contempt for his wife ;
 d’Estiolles, who could not but know
 what was so publicly known, the con-

dition of her person, which rendered her as useless to him in one sense as to the king, and who was besides engaged with a number of mistresses, would now have been very loath to take her back, even if he had not been so powerfully entreated and so well paid for not doing it. Perhaps too, on finding the matter thus left to his option, he might not be sorry to seize so fair an opportunity of being pleasantly enough revenged on his majesty, for his having taken away his wife from him, by leaving him so bad a bargain in his hands, since he seemed so fond of it, and which d'Estiolles had besides now so good a right to call his refusal.

He made no more objection to what was desired of him, than what would at once make the greater merit of his com-

pliance, and not provoke, by too apparent a slight, a woman from whom he had so much to hope and to fear. In short, the prince of Soubize had reason to go away very well pleased with his success in this noble negociation.

La Pompadour's letter came in the time mentioned to d'Estiollles's hand, and he answered it conformably to the cue the prince had given him, or who rather had dictated to him what he was to say.

“ He began with congratulating her
 “ on her return to sentiments more
 “ worthy of her. He expressed the
 “ highest regret of her separation from
 “ him, which had made a wound in
 “ his peace too wide ever to be closed
 “ again. That he heartily however
 “ forgave the injury, but that he had

“ taken an inviolable resolution, never
“ to cohabit with her again. That it
“ was superfluous for her to expect it.”

In short, though the refusal was couched in the politest terms of respect and esteem, it was as flat and peremptory as she could have wished.

Armed with these victorious instruments, the copy of her own letter, and her husband's answer, she communicated them to all whom they might concern. “ She was no longer in
“ fault.—She had, it was true, been in
“ a wrong way, but she was now a contrite penitent, and acquitted in course
“ for living from her husband, by his
“ denying to receive her.” Instead of one bishop of that church she might now have had twenty to give her the white-wash of absolution, and to administer to her the Eastern-communion.

This farce then, in which religion was so palpably mocked, though it deceived no-body, had its full effect. The capital objection to her admission into the queen's train was now removed, and the queen herself, with her usual condescension, desisted from any further opposition; she only said with a smile, "It was not proper for me to give my reasons, and they have taken the advantage of that, not to leave me my pretexts."

In the mean time, all the well-disposed at court groaned over this fresh instance of la Pompadour's power of thus forcing herself upon the queen. In other respects, however, in justice to truth, it must be owned that she always behaved with the utmost respect and obsequiousness to her majesty.

In fact she durst not do otherwise. She knew too well that the king's delicacy, in that point, was too great not to be shocked, at the least shadow of offence she should give the queen by any petulance, or airs of a mistress.

She knew that all her favor would scarce be sufficient to protect her against his displeasure, on any just provocation of that sort, of which her majesty should have to complain, and regulated herself accordingly. Thus, passing art for nature, she made a merit of self-interest, and of what was, strictly speaking, rather the king's virtue than her own.

It was also part of her policy to do any of the royal family whatever good offices lay in her power, that did not

interfere with her system of maintaining her ascendant over the king. By this means, she disarmed, in some measure, the resentment of those to whom the ties of nature, and the frequency of access to his ear, might give opportunities of throwing in some shrewd observation, or oblique reflections, to her disadvantage, especially in certain moments, when the impression might be anticipated to remain. There had lately appeared an infamous obscene book, which was long by the public imputed to the count of Cayans, a nobleman of great literature, to whom it was said an advocate of Paris had only lent his name; but, whoever was the writer, it fell into the hands of one of the first young ladies in France. As she was reading it, she was surpriz-

ed by her elder sister, who snatched it out of her hands, before she could well hide it in a work-basket, which was just at hand. This sister, who, in the midst of all the latitude of the court-morals, had preserved the greatest purity in her own, was shocked at the discovery, and carried it directly to the head-governess, madam de Tallard, who possibly would have been for stifling the scandal, upon a proper remonstrance to the young lady who had offended, if she would but have given up the name of the person who had put it into her hands. But this was a point on which she was inflexible. This created a sort of necessity for the matter to be laid before the king, who, with a due degree of resentment, laid his commands so indispensably on the

young lady, that she could not help giving the satisfaction required of her; and, with all the mitigation the circumstance would admit, even to the condemning her own indiscretion, she owned the reception of it from madam d'Andelot her sub-governess. Upon this declaration, it is certain a much severer punishment would have fallen on the delinquent, madam d'Andelot, than merely the loss of her place, for so heinous a breach of trust, in so nice a point, if madam de Pompadour had not interposed her good offices in favor of the delinquent. Nor was it out of any simplicity or tenderness for the nature of the offence, that she interceded for her, as in most points she paid, at least in all outward appearance, the most delicate regard to decency, but

purely in a view to alleviate the young lady's distress and terrors on the account of a woman in whom this cruel complaisance had been rather a weakness than an intentional guilt, the punishment too of which might have reflected on herself. Surely, if the authors of such inflammatory writings were but previously to consider the mischief likely to arise from their works of darkness falling, as they too often do, in the way of unwary innocence, they would, with horror, disdain to appear in the character of panders to vice and promoters of the corruption of morals. Great is undoubtedly their guilt; but greater yet, if possible, that of the mean, cool, designing villain, who, in the despair of compassing his ends, by fair war, makes use of such

unlawful arms for the seduction of virtue. They do not consider too, independantly of the baseness and indelicacy of such practices, that, even in case of success, the game killed by such poisoned arrows is hardly safe eating.

It has already been mentioned that, before her intimacy with the king, she had a daughter by monsieur d'Estiolles. Her name was Alexandrina, and the king was so fond of her, that the child used very naturally to call him her papa.

He even took so tender an interest in her, that he very early turned his thought upon providing a match for her, and she was with reason looked upon as one of the greatest fortunes in Europe.

The first person on whom the king

had designs for her, was the duke de Fronſac, ſon to the duke de Richelieu. He propoſed it to the father, who being too thorough-bred a courtier to give his majeſty a flat denial, waved it, by ſaying coolly, “that he ſhould conſult the houſe of Lorrain about it,” from whom he was deſcended by the mother’s ſide. Such an answer was eaſily to be conſtrued as a polite equivalent to a refusal.

It does not however appear but that the king had too much juſtice to reſent it, ſince the duke continued, at leaſt for ſome time, in the ſame favour as before, and probably not the leſs eſteemed for not having been tempted to embrace ſuch a miſ-alliance by ſo fordid a conſideration as that of the fortune or even the favor tacked to it.

As to the girl herself, she resembled La Pompadour in more than one point. She was extremely pretty, very sprightly, and not a little assuming on the favor of her mother.

Yet, young as she was, that might be more the fault of those who flattered her, than her own. She was boarded and educated at the convent of the Assumption, where mademoiselle Charlotte de Rohan-Soubize, daughter to the prince de Soubize, and since married to the present prince de Conde, then was, with other young ladies of the highest distinction.

Alexandrina d'Estiolles, either from ignorance or presumption, disputed, on some occasion, precedence with this princess. She was soon given to understand her error; but when her mo-

ther la Pompadour was told of it, she did not seem to give up the point, since she only said slightly enough, "ELLE A MANQUE DE POLITESSE." "She has failed in point of politeness."

This Alexandrina, at the age of between thirteen and fourteen, died of the small-pox, in the same convent, about the year 1754, just as her mother was negotiating a treaty of marriage for her with one of the princes of the house of Nassau, with what probability of succeeding is not said.

To a heart so engrossed as her's, with ambition, vanity, and love of money, it would probably be doing too much honor to suspect there having been much room left in it for nature. The king's taking the tenderest part in the affliction she felt or acted

for this loss, and the hurry and agitations of a court, soon dissipated her grief. What she might continue to feel longest, was, her being now deprived of that plausible excuse to the world and to herself, for her eagerness in accumulating immense riches, having no child to provide for. But that was, like many others, who plead the same extenuation of that odious vice, merely and constitutionally avarice for avarice sake: this misfortune rather served to prove; since it never appeared to have robbed that passion, in her, of a single wish or endeavour to satisfy it.

Her brother Poisson, or marquis de Marigny's, being the heir apparent of that prodigious fortune she was unweariedly amassing, would rather have

been a damp to her ardor for amassing, if it had not been purely in her a selfish gratification.

Nothing is more certain, than that she ever had a sovereign contempt for him. For him to be very dear to her, he crossed too much her views of vanity, in his natural unsusceptibility of improvement, and the impossibility she saw in him, of ever gracing the advantages she procured for him, and of doing her honor.

Constantly mortified at seeing him the object of raillery of the court, and indeed of the whole world, she would, if his want of merit had not been too glaring, have willingly attributed the slights with which he met, to that envy, she was weak enough to think, her fortune excited, and which

was rather a mixture of scorn and indignation, in all who considered the first foundations of her fortune and power, and her abuse of them. As it was, she thought it the better air to join the laugh against him, and not to lose, at least, the honor of her discernment by defending him.

The truth is, that, naturally endowed with a taste, cultivated by a superior education, she could not dissemble to herself his incorrigible worthlessness. A coarse ignoble air, rendered yet more conspicuous and more shocking by that insolence so natural to the low-born, when taken out of their element, the dirt, made him at once her disgrace and her despair. To do her justice, however, she omitted no pains, nor expence, to make something tolerable of

him. In order to qualify him especially for that post she had procured for him, and for which he was, by nature, so totally unfit, that of director of the buildings and manufactures of France, she had sent him to Italy, under proper instructors, to obtain an insight into those liberal arts and sciences, which were to be under his direction. She took herself the trouble to tutor him, and endeavoured to inform him of some conception of the great objects of taste. But all these inculcated lessons could make, on that hard head of his, but a momentary impression; which, like the effect of rich manure on poor lands, soon perished, and left it to return to its native barrenness. His memory, like that of a parrot, served him just to retain the jargon of a few

technical terms, which he often misapplied, and which gave him, with those who knew as little of the matter as himself, an air of being a connoisseur. There are at Paris many real judges, and admirable artists; but as power and fortune always find flatterers, many of acknowledged taste and talents did not disdain to pay him an interested court; some of them even gave up to him, the honor of designs and plans, which they themselves had suggested to him. This was, for example, the case of the repairs, and of the finishing the front of the Louvre; the merit of which, was currently attributed to him, though, in fact, he had no other claim than his not rejecting what by the bye, he durst not reject, his sister's recommendation of

an able artist's scheme of the work. It was also owing to this deference of his to the marchioness, that, his choice of persons of talents for employs, in his department, was generally, and not without reason, approved. Thus, by the help of borrowed lights, and of the respect at least outwardly paid to favor, even where it makes, as it ofteneft does, a bad choice, he became barely endurable. Nothing, however, could ever cure the native sordidness of his avarice which was for ever breaking out, and exposing his original meanness. La Pompadour, who on the contrary, though rapacioufly fond of money, understood perfectly well, the art of occasionally making sacrifices of that cold, dirty, creeping passion, to parts of honor due to her projects for captivating the public opinion.

It could not then be extremely pleasing to the marchioness to find she had a brother, in whom there was naturally not the stuff to make a man; and whom, nevertheless, her vanity would not suffer her to abandon, or leave in that state of mediocrity, which, had she known what was really best, she would have preferred, for him. But not content with setting him up for a laughing-stock, the desire of being the foundress of a family, as she was herself past the hopes of issue, gave her the idea of procuring a wife for him. But this, at least during her life, suffered invincible difficulties from her nicety of choice. It is true, that, among the indigent or unnoticed nobility, she might perhaps have easily found some with whom the

considerations of opulence and favor, might overcome any repugnance to such a mis-alliance. But that would not satisfy la Pompadour's modest pretensions. It must have been a family not only noble, but wealthy, and decorated with the highest orders, and greatest offices in the state, into which she would have vouchsafed to match her illustrious brother. Now such were not quite so easily found, as she might imagine. Few of them would be tempted to incur so thorough a ridicule, as such an alliance could not fail to throw upon them.

And yet a great pity it would be that he should too long remain unmatched, lest all Europe should have to lament the extinction of the august house of Poisson.

It is now high time to bring upon the stage an adventure which, for the singularity of some of its circumstances, will hardly be pronounced void of entertainment.

Some time after la Pompadour's infirmity had made her, in a certain sense, unapproachable to the king; his person, if not his heart, was considered as offering a vacancy. Among the fair sex there appeared, on the ranks, a number of candidates for his election of the happy one to fill it. Nor were there wanting amongst the courtiers, many who aspired to the honor of recommending an acceptable object.

One of the competitors for this honorable service, a young nobleman, produced to the king, as something

worthy remark, a portrait in miniature procured for that purpose. It was that of a young girl, beautiful beyond imagination. The falling in love with a picture is an incident worn so threadbare, by its having been employed in thousands of novels and romances, that to say the king conceived any such passion at the bare sight of the portrait, would be giving this story the air of fiction. It will not appear at all incredible, for him to have said, on considering the exquisiteness of the features, and the beauty of the complexion, that it could be nothing but a fancy-picture, as he did not imagine that throughout all nature, there could be found its original. The nobleman assured him, that the girl whose like-

ness the portrait presented, was not only existing, but not hard to be had. This piqued the king's curiosity, and, perhaps, his desire. He said he should not be sorry to see her, if it was only to satisfy himself whether he was mistaken or not. This was hint enough to the nobleman, who immediately took care she should be brought to him.

The name of the young creature, who was scarce fourteen, was Murphy. She was born in France, but originally of Irish extraction. The circumstances of her family must have been the lowest imaginable, since her sister actually served for a model at the academy of painters, and herself had been designed to succeed her, in due time, in the same employ; and, in the mean while,

was actually in treaty with a manager of one of the theatres, to give her a chance of trying her talents under his protection.

The king at the sight of her readily confessed, that her picture had done her less than justice. Her extreme beauty, the freshness of a complexion, of which the comparison to roses would be a compliment to the rose, her springing-bloom, her infant-graces, the air of sweet timidity natural to that age, and yet increased by the overpowering sense of his presence, that innocence he presumed, and it is assured, he found in her; all conspired to excite desires, of which there was no necessity for one of his rank to languish an instant for the gratification of with one of hers.

He signified his pleasure, and she had been purposely brought to him, ready disposed, and having had her cue to conform to it. Then it was that he enjoyed a feast of pure nature, a feast too good for a king. Since there are so few in that station of life, but have their taste too vitiated by all the false refinements of courts, to have even an idea of beauty's being exalted by simplicity. Unhappy enough never to be acquainted with truth in any thing, their whole life is one dull mistake of falsity for her, and in nothing more than in their choice of mistresses. In these how often do they take the grossest art and design for pure love; the nauseously affected airs acquired by education, for improved nature; and rich cloaths, jewels, paint, and all the

non-naturals of dress, for charms above those exquisite ones of naked nature! We shall soon see that in the case of the young Murphy, this reflexion is not entirely an impertinent one.

She was now become the king's little mistress in form, the essential part of the ceremony having been consummated. He had, however, no mind to produce her openly at his court, though, if beauty could give rank, she might have disputed precedence with an empress. He was not unaware of, nor perhaps above fearing, the raillery and sneers, to which an air unpolished, the natural simplicity of her answers, and her childish strangeness and admiration of every thing new to her, would probably expose her. Neither could it be expected, that she

herself would not be unpleasingly dazzled with so sudden a transition from the deepest obscurity to the strongest glare of pomp and magnificence. At courts there are many things to giddy the head, and but few to touch the heart. The privacy in which he proposed to keep his little novice, was rather a kindness to her; if he should think fit afterwards to bring her into public life, she would by this means be broke into it by more tolerable degrees. As to la Pompadour, it could not well be thought, circumstanced as things were between them, that he should push his delicacy with regard to her, to the length of laying himself under any constraint of concealment from her: yet that has been said, and not without some grounds of reason, especially with a just distinction of times.

The point was now to procure some snug retired place at hand, and convenient of access to the king, where she might be kept under the care of proper persons. But a place accommodated to all these ends, was not easily to be found. His good friend la Pompadour, helped him out in this perplexity.

As there was not a motion made, or a step taken by the king, of which she had not the earliest intelligence by her spies, and persons of confidence near his person, she was soon apprized of this new fancy. She could not but be prepared for some such thing, and nothing was less fit to alarm her, than his thus picking out a raw unexperienced girl for his amusing himself with her, in the way that she herself

could not amuse him. She had at least nothing to apprehend from her purely on this head: so obvious was the fitness of this choice to calm any alarm of hers, at the king's engaging with another than herself, that it was by many believed to be of her own suggestion, and even management. But in this she was wronged: she had too much art and experience of things to contribute her ministry to the provision of a mistress for him. The dilemma was plain. If he should like her enough to attach himself to her, she was supplanted in course. If, on the other hand, his mistress should come to disgust him, he would have to reproach her with the badness of her choice for him. Besides, that it would have shewn too gross, too indelicate in her, to be active in such a

procurement. On the whole, then, she took a far better part; she made a merit to him, in her acquiescence in his pleasures, and of her readiness to promote them.

Proceeding upon this plan, upon being acquainted with the king's embarrassment, about getting a convenient place for his mistress, she took the first opportunity of relieving him from it, by the offer of a small house, which was at her disposal, and extremely well situated for the purpose. This was a solitary retreat, which had been built for herself, and was, together with its gardens, taken out of that part of the park of Versailles, nearest to the road of St. Germain's. This was another of the incroachments on the public, in her favor, that had given no small

offence. It was commonly called La Pompadour's Hermitage. Imagination can hardly figure to itself a more delicious retreat. The most rural style was preserved through every part of it. The house itself was a small, unshowy building, much in the manner of a farm-house, with a dairy behind it. Every thing for use or ornament of the inside, expressed a sweet neatness and a noble simplicity. No expence had been spared to embellish it, that could take place without prejudice to propriety. Every thing breathed a country-air. The paintings, all of the most masterly hands, presented nothing but gay landscapes, pastoral scenery, and country-revels on the green. Little images of swains and nymphs were properly interspersed, with here and

there, for the contrast-sake, that of some hoary hermit. The apartments were furnished and hung with nothing but the finest and most lively colored Chintz, that gave them a cool airy look.

The Gardens, without being laid out in frigidly symmetrized compartments, had nevertheless an imperceptible regular variety. There was in one part of it a large bosquet of roses, in the center of which stood a statue of the God of Love, finely executed. Here myrtles, there jessamins, offered their embowering shade. The flower-plots, though seemingly without order, had each its particular kind, unconfounded with others : jonquils, pinks, violets, tuberoses, all at a certain nearness, yielding, for their being thus unmixed, their

respective odors, the more pure, and the more distinctly marked; which yet, at a little distance, blendingly united into one general fragrance.

On each side of the garden-door into the park, open arcades, circularly disposed, and raised in stories over one another, formed two kind of amphitheatres of flowers covering their surface with a most beautiful variegation. Plats of verdure, a fine piece of water, enlivened by swans in front of the house, walks of ever-greens, all found a place, uncrowded, in this not very extensive spot. No beauty, in short, was omitted, that Art could steal unobserved into Nature. Nothing, in truth, was unnatural in this retreat, except the owner of it, La Pompadour herself, who, with a ridiculous and

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surfeiting affectation, used to come, in recess, here, in the style of a shepherdess of Arcadia, and give herself the air of amusing herself with country-housewifery, and playing the dairy-maid, by way, forsooth, of unbending from the fatigues of a court, and of forgetting, for a while, her present grandeur, as she had long done her primitive littleness. But incapable as she was of the simplicity of nature, it was spoiling the character of a milk-maid, for her to affect it.

To this retreat, so far preferable, in point of true taste, to the pompous palace of Versailles, where true pleasure is lost in a croud of false ones, or catches its death of cold in an uncomfortable vastness of apartments, was the young Murphy brought; a figure

and character much more congenial to the spirit of the place than the owner, who had just quitted it for the time. The trusty Le Bel, manager in chief of this, not the least important, branch of the royal amusements, had so disposed matters, that the king was introduced to her, in the character of a private gentleman, in a small employment about the court; and, as he had taken care to be assured, that she had never seen him before, this easily passed upon a raw unexperienced girl. It has been justly observed by a great master of the art of love, that love and majesty rarely agree: on the truth of which, it may fairly be presumed, that the king's pleasure did not suffer by this innocent deception. Every thing having succeeded with her to his wish, he re-

sorted to her at his hours of convenience or desire, while she understood the intervals to be filled up in his attendance, and on the duties of his post. In this bower of bliss, under the shade of privacy, adding yet a poignancy to enjoyment, he passed minutes, he might have justly called the most voluptuous of his life, if he had had the taste to set a just value on his happiness. But a long use of the feverish high diet of made sauces, à la Pompadour, had furred his palate, and spoiled his relish for this plain, more wholesome, and infinitely better tasted dish.

Not but wit may claim great consideration, even where youth and beauty may have declined, or not exist in a very superior degree: but then it must be on this condition, that

such wit should not be, as it too often is, mischievous or dangerously employed, and thus become rather a reproach than a merit; while so delicious a creature as the young Murphy needed no more of its seasoning, than would just defend her from insipidity. For at her age, she could, properly speaking, only give the hope of wit, and that she did give, being remarkably sprightly, and quick of apprehension. Compare her then in imagination, with la Pompadour, and her whole system of faded attractions, and only the more forbidding for that rankness of artifice which obtained her the king's preference; and it will not be hard to pronounce on which of the two objects, the choice of a man of taste would fall. The exquisite beauty of this young

creature, her florid bloom, her artless innocence, her native ingenuity, all those points, so captivating and endearing to a truly refined voluptuary, who would have found an additional pleasure in trying to form and qualify her for more than one sort of conversation, were lost upon one insensible to the charms of unadulterated nature, from his having so long been a captive to the enchantment of art. An enchantment he had not, it seems, the power to break. For la Pompadour's favor, so far from suffering any decline, seemed rather to gather such strength from incidents of this kind, which did not in the least interfere with the ascendancy she had gained over him, rather rendered her the more secure, from his thinking himself obliged to

redouble his regard and favor, not only to quiet any apprehension she might have from these transient gallantries, in which his heart had no concern, but also to recompence her for the ease and conveniency he found in having her for a confidante, and occasional assistant in them.

He had continued, for some time, his visits to his little mistress, without her ever dreaming of the quality of her lover, when, one day, a print, which bore a striking resemblance to his majesty, happening to be brought her, just before he paid her a visit, she could not help observing the likeness, and, probably without any suspicion of the reality, and from purely a sentiment of the heart, told him, "she was sure the king must be a very pretty

"man, he was so like him she loved."

At this, he could not refrain from smiling in a manner that did not fail to open her eyes; and, whether he was superiorly pleased with the artless compliment paid to his person, or being weary of the character he thought he no longer needed, he might be prevailed on by the curiosity of seeing how the discovery would be taken by her, he dropped, at once, the disguise, and confessed the monarch.

This sudden revelation, rather frightened than pleased her; it overcame her so, that it was with great difficulty he recovered her spirits, and, prevailed on her to familiarize herself with his change of character; a change, from which, whatever advantage ac-

crued to vanity, was so much lost to love.

After this, her sequestration from her friends, which had been contrived, under cover of plausible pretexts, began to be somewhat relaxed; but she was still kept, in such a state of reserve, that very few indeed of the ladies of court, had admittance to her; and even those few, so dangerous are all court connexions, she could not see with impunity, as the reader will observe by the following instance, in which the king gave so shining a proof of his superior attachment to la Pompadour.

In one of his hours of dalliance with his new mistress, and in the consequent spirit of familiarity, so natural on such an intimacy, she asked him archly, "how matters stood between

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"him and his old woman." The king, enraged at these words, which he knew could not be the child's own, frowned, bit his lips, and, looking sternly at her, commanded her to tell him who it was that had set her on to talk to him in that strain. The poor girl, frightened out of her wits at the air she saw him put on, threw herself at his feet, and without hesitation gave up the person who had tutored her to that effect.

It was the marchioness d'Estrades, who had long lived on the terms of the most unreserved familiarity and confidence with la Pompadour. But female friendships, especially at court, were never of a very durable nature. Certain points of pique and passion had for some time disunited them.

The marchioness, who had cultivated an acquaintance with the young Murphy, perhaps, only out of compliment to the king, began to think of turning it to the account of her animosity against la Pompadour. In this view, to place her in a ridiculous point of light to the king, and the stronger for that natural air of truth in the mouth of a child, she suggested to the girl those words, which she repeated in the innocence of her heart, and all quite unaware of the consequences of this pernicious counsel. One and the first of them was, that the king, incensed beyond measure, immediately banished madam d'Estrades to her estate in the country.

As to the young Murphy, he had probably too much justice, not to

make due allowance for the simplicity of her age, and inexperience, having been, instrumentally to another's designs, betrayed into giving him the offence he had taken.

But as her merely personal beauty, and the enjoyment of it, now palled by repetition, stood as nothing in the balance against the habitual passion and taste he had retained for la Pompadour; if this incident was not the occasion, it was at least the epoch, of his resolution to part with her; a resolution that was hastened by the circumstance of her being with child by him. This will indeed sound strange to such as may not know his dislike of having natural children, who should take name and rank from that claim of birth. This aversion was founded

on what he knew of the troubles which, in his minority, had been excited on occasion of the pretensions of the natural sons of Lewis the Fourteenth. In order to prevent the like, and of disembarassing himself of a mistress grown indifferent to him, he gave orders that a match should be provided for her. In this there was little or no difficulty. The great point was, how to prevail on the discarded fair one to quit her apartments, without such a violence as would have shocked the king's good-nature to have used towards her. She sincerely loved him, and on the intimation of the order for her removal, though signified to her with all imaginable tenderness, she fell into fits; nor when recovered, talked of any thing but the destroying herself,

or, at least, of not surviving the cruelty of this proposed separation. In short, it required all Le Bel's art, management, and rhetoric, to sooth her despair, and to reconcile her to the necessity of resigning her pretensions to any longer stay at court. He talked reason to her; but when did ever love hearken to reason? It was less then to the power of his arguments, less to the power of authority, than to the power of her own love over her, that she yielded, being made to understand that this removal was the pleasure of him she loved, and that she would forfeit his regard for ever, if she did not implicitly submit to the injunctions which superior considerations obliged him to lay on her. She obeyed then with reluctance, but she obeyed; and

the king's intention being known, soon procured a husband for her, who, though a man of quality, was uneasy enough in his fortune, to overlook the slur of such an alliance, in consideration of the great advantages it brought with it; an ample settlement on the wife, and the child with which she was pregnant, and to which he was to pass for the father, and the future interest he might reasonably presume from that circumstance. One of the conditions of the match was, it seems, that he should keep her in the country and not suffer her to come near the court. But if they were capable of making just estimates of things, this was an addition to the favor.

This restraint was, however, some time afterwards so taken off, that they

were permitted to come to Paris, and even to reside there.

Thus ended the adventure of the fair Murphy, in which there was so much more of pleasure than of dignity, while the lowness of the object could hardly be said to have afforded the marchioness a triumph. Her influence was felt by much higher personages. She had taken a pique against the marshal d'Etrées, and was determined to satisfy it at any rate. In the bottom of her heart she detested the marshal Richlieu, not only from being sensible that he did himself the honor of most perfectly despising her, but for his being a kind of associate with her in the king's favor, from his competition with her in schemes for amusing him. The consideration, however, of the superior

service or mischief they were capable of doing one another, engaged them to preserve fair appearances of mutual regard, and even of friendship to each other.

There had existed for some time this league of interests, and now the hatred on one side, and the jealousy of profession on the other, of both which the marshal d'Etrées was the object, became another center of union to them. The consequence of which it is probable, was the recall of the marshal d'Etrées, when in full career of victory and its consequences; and the substitution of Richelieu, who lost all the ground that the other had won.

It has been said, that la Pompadour, received collaterally another retribution from this last general, in gratitude for

his promotion; a retribution at least as agreeable to her passion of avarice, as the other point was to her vindictiveness: that was, in his connivance at the traffic she made of her influence in the naming forrage-contracters, superintendants of the hospitals, victuallers, and other jobs for the army, which were constantly given, not to those the fittest for the service, but to those who gave her the most money.

The following scene is currently attributed to d'Etrées, after his return to court, on quitting the command of the army in Germany. The king could not well refuse a general of so much merit, a gracious reception. He intimated however to him, that he should take it well if he would see la Pompadour. The marshal complied, and

waited on her. She had set her face, on the occasion, to a most placid air of graciousness with all the falsity she could command. He made her a respectful bow, and the following speech: "I come, madam, by the king my master's command, to pay you my respects. I know perfectly well, the nature of your sentiments towards me; but I rely too much on the king's justice to be afraid of them." With these words, which he left her to digest as she might, he withdrew, without waiting for her answer.

But, besides the sacrifices of so able a general, in so critical a conjuncture; to a mistress, she also enjoyed that of one of the head ministers of the kingdom. This was monsieur d'Argenson, secretary of state.

When that execrable attempt was made on the king's life by Damiens, who could not be too severely punished, if he committed it in his senses; nor, in all humanity and even justice, too much pitied, nor too readily pardoned, if it was merely owing to the deep misfortune of his wanting them; the wound he had given was, at first, imagined to have more danger than appeared on examination. The king's death was expected by the whole court, and by himself. It is easy to conceive what emotions such an accident must excite. The marchioness was, just at that time, at Trianon, giving orders for an entertainment, for his reception, and had with her a great many of the court, of both sexes. The news being brought to her of the horrid assassination, with

the assurance of its being effectual, threw her into a fit. This misfortune plucked off the courtiers mask, with so quick a hand, that of all the circle so numerous, but a few instants before, she did not, at her recovery out of her fit, find one soul left, except the prince de Soubize. The summer-flies were all fled. He alone, amidst this general desertion, had the courage to stay to comfort her, and to assure her of an attachment, proof against every insult of fortune.

In the first moments of her terror and distraction, she was for instantly leaving France, to avoid the persecution and indignities, those enemies, who, having never wanted the inclination, would now have the power with the will of resenting upon her. In this terrible

dilemma, monsieur de Soubize gave her better advice than fear had done, which is ever but a bad counsellor. He exhorted her, by all means, to stay and face the event whatever it should be. "While there was life in the king, there were still hopes: that no way of losing a game was worse than desperately throwing it up." In short, what with his persuasions, what with some recovery of her spirits, from their first shock and depression, she was prevailed on to risk her stay; while the prince, together with madam de Baschi, her sister-in-law, took upon them to order all matters for her, as well as the emergency would permit, and to prepare every thing for the worst that could happen. This was a service, the friendliness of which, at

such a time, and amidst such a croud of contrary examples, had doubtless a great merit to the marchioness, and engaged her, independently of the duty of gratitude, to look on the prince as a steadfast friend, which is not, especially at courts, nor indeed any where, a character to be easily met with. Stay then she did; and, as it was natural to think that la Pompadour would, on this occasion, not fail of flying to express her concern for his majesty, there was a powerful party formed to forbid her the presence. The bishop who attended the king, urged it as a matter of conscience. D'Argenson indulged his private sentiments in strongly seconding him. La Pompadour in course presents herself at the chamber-door, and has the mortification to have it

shut in her face. It was a great pity. The courtiers lost, by this repulse, one of the most compleatly theatrical scenes that ever could be acted. Imagination, with all its powers in the picturesque strain, can hardly form to itself any thing so high as the reality, had it been admitted, would probably have subscribed. The tragic tone, the attempt at dignity in distress, the tender terrors, the grief too mighty for utterance, or only vented in broken exclamations, were all a rich diversion of which the court was by this means cruelly deprived. She herself being bitterly disappointed of the display of those airs, was forced to swallow the affront thus publicly put upon her, tho' with a stomach, it may be imagined, very little disposed to digest it.

As the danger of the wound had, however, been rather measured by the importance of the person, than by its reallity, all alarm for its being fatal ceased the very next day; and in two or three more, the king, thoroughly recovered, saw company, and resumed his usual system of life. One of his first visits was to la Pompadour, who received him all in tears, with a countenance aptly composed for the impression she had meditated. To her compliments on his recovery, succeeded the most pathetic expostulation with him, for the treatment she had met with. She concluded with observing to him, "That since she found she
" was to be debarred from personal
" attendance on him, when it was
" most her duty to pay it, and him-

"self had most occasion for it, it was
 "better for her to withdraw in time,
 "and deprive her enemies of the malig-
 "nant joy of offering her such another
 "indignity."

This threat of withdrawing, rarely
 made by women in her situation, but
 when they are sure of not being taken
 at their word, had its full effect on the
 king. Determined to give her all the
 satisfaction she could require, and
 much more than she ought to have re-
 quired; he banished from court the
 scrupulous bishop, and three or four
 more of the courtiers, who had most
 distinguished themselves in opposing
 her entrance. D'Argenson, he dismis-
 sed from his employments, without
 any mitigation of his disgrace. For the
 continuing his nephew in place was not

any, since the young marquis de Paulmy d'Argenson, he was satisfied, observed another sort of conduct towards la Pompadour, than the uncle, who had long made open profession of detesting her; sentiments which she most cordially returned, and did not slip this opportunity of gratifying.

Paulmy d'Argenson, however, did not hold his posts long after his uncle. He was (in the year 1758) driven out of power by the force of conjectures, on his having served la Pompadour but too effectually in her schemes against the marshal d'Etrées. Her favor could no longer save him. So true it is, that when one's affairs are put on so irregular a footing, as such a woman's whim, every thing becomes precarious. Thwarting her brings dis-

grace; humoring her does the same, from the consequences being thrown not upon her, but on him who humors her. This last was the young d'Argenson's case, who, together with Rouillé, another minister, having, in compliance to la Pompadour, aided and abetted the Maillebois in their combinations against marshall d'Etrées; who on clearing himself so nobly as he did, were forced to be sacrificed to that just clamour and resentment of the public, with which even despotism itself is sometimes obliged to temporize, and keep measures.

But, what occasioned the most surprise was, monsieur de Machault, keeper of the seals, going out of power at the same time, and, I think, the same day, as the elder D'Argenson. For

Machault was at the head of a party directly opposite to him, and was known to be devoted to la Pompadour. It is true, that he had represented, with some warmth, against the excessive expences of the king, especially in his petits-soupers, or what are called the pleasure apartments. For as to the charges of the grand couvert, or public meals, they cannot exceed, being regulated by a standing order. So frivolous a pretext, however, for his dismissal, as that of the king and la Pompadour, or la Pompadour and the king's, having taken offence at the liberty of his remonstrances on this occasion, could hardly have been received at all, if it had not been given out with an air of mystery and acquaintance with the secrets of the court.

But those accustomed to penetrate deeper than the surface of things, particularly with respect to courts, fancied they saw, in this so apparent inconsistent a co-incidence of disgraces, the continuance and even the proof of a policy constantly attributed to la Pompadour. Perhaps their conjecture was over-refined. If so, those who know better, will have a right to laugh at and explode it. The ground of it is, however, so curious, and paints so strongly part of the French character, that, let the inferences be true or false, as to la Pompadour, it cannot be suppressed to so much advantage as stated.

There can be few, who have not heard of the differences between the clergy and the parliament of Paris. But it may not perhaps be so universally

understood, that the matter of dispute is frivolous beyond imagination: beyond what one could ever suspect the French themselves, with all their turn for trifling, of treating seriously. Swift's celebrated controversy between the big ^EIndians and the little Endians, in Lilliput, turned upon a point, literally speaking, of incomparably more importance. The ascertainment whether an egg had better be broke at the great or small end is, after all, of some little utility to mankind, and falls at least within the senses. But those points of religious metaphysics, broached at first by one Jansenius, and since his death made the foundation of a spiritual and temporal schism in France, besides their perfect insignificance and ridiculousness, which are by their very

nature eternally undeterminable by all human judgment; he who gave birth to them, the clergy that opposed them, the parliament that favoured them; must have been, are, and must for ever be, all equally and necessarily in a profound ignorance of the right of either side of the question; and, if they were decided, would not contribute the value of a pin's point to the quiet and happiness of mankind, whom they are in the mean time suffered to disturb.

The Jesuits, who constantly affect the most blind obedience to the Roman see, had taken the lead of the opposition to the Jansenists, whose tenets in some points were as false as their own in many others. As to the doctrinal difference, the less considerable it was, the greater the rage of dissention, which

is always the case in theological disputes. The more two sects resemble one another, the fiercer their enmity, as the hatred of brothers is extreme. Thus, it is the governing principle of the Romish persuasion, to destroy all its nearest relations to the Christian religion; and thus that inconsistent unnatural policy of the Great Turk to strangle all his brothers, that he may have no competitors for his despotism to fear.

This appearance of the Jesuits, taking part so violently against the Jansenists, did those last no disservices with the parliament, who, at bottom, most probably despise them both; its intervention had then much the advantage in point of justice, since its activity was employed to relieve the people from the tyranny of the clergy,

obstinately bent on cramming the bull Unigenitus down their carping throats. But even that activity, laudable as it stands in its motives, might perhaps have been better employed, if, instead of taking for its object those certificates of Anti-Jansenism, exacted from dying persons (a tyranny that from its great absurdity and senselessness must soon have ceased of itself) the parliament had exerted itself against the court's over-whelming the subject with accumulated taxes and imposts, and not have lost sight of a substance, to run a shadow-hunting.

In the actual state of things, it was natural for both parties to look up to the king, as capable of giving great weight to which-ever side he should chuse, although the clergy does not

acknowledge him for its judge. That prerogative of judging is, it seems, specially reserved for some little dirty Italian priest, who, from his being canonically superannuated enough to be exalted to the papal chair, is consequently oftenest a dotard. Now, imagine, who can, so exquisite a jest, as that of a silly old man's fulminating from that mock-altitude, his claim to infallibility, that great prerogative, which is so uncommunicably reserved to God! A claim, which, with many others of his scarce less impudently mad, are only fit to be dated from Bedlam, and can pass but on those who are duly qualified for an hospital of ideots.

And, to say the truth, even in the countries subject to the Popish super-

stitution, those once tremendous thunders of the vatican, have been reduced to little more than squibs and crackers, only fit to frighten old women and children. Who then would not pity poor Rezzonico cramming sweetmeats all day, and crying over the sad decline of the church?

But whatever were the remains of the papal influence of France, still much depended on the king's declaring himself; and since so much did depend upon it, it may reasonably be supposed, that he was not a little embarrassed about the part he should take.

If he should suffer the clergy to depress the parliament, there was to be feared, that, dropping its idle object of contention, the parliament would, if but out of resentment, recur to a

much more proper and important consideration, the expediency of lightening the burden of the people devoured by taxes and exactions. That parliament has not, it is true, the authority, the dignity, nor the weight of the British one ; but still the very name of parliament carries with it, in that country, where its privileges are so miserably abridged, some thing in the sound, favourable to the subject. The verification of the Burfal edicts issued by the court, which is held a necessary form, though but a form, and the right of remonstrance still continued to the parliament, are circumstances that, joined to its credit with the people, do not suffer its sentiments to be entirely insignificant.

If, on the other hand, the king, by

too signal a partiality, should give way to the parliament's reducing the clergy to order, he would have to apprehend the disaffection and even revolt of that formidable body, whose influence is well known over the *mass* of the people; which, though it might be instinctively averse to the clergy's triumphing over the parliament, would not be the less apt, on any appearance of its being persecuted, to take fire from its incendiaries and break out into a general blaze. "Religion is in danger," would be the alarming cry; and what is reason opposed to the fury of excited superstition?

Besides that, as the king's great object was to get money from both sides, clergy and laity, the too much disobliging of either might, in the consequences, weaken his own power over both.

Evident as this dilemma was, he must, in course, be under great perplexity how to act. It was reserved for the superior subtilty and artifice of la Pompadour to relieve him : at least she had the credit of it. Her counsel was, that, the position of things considered, the king should by temporizing with both parties, suffer neither to preponderate, but occasionally throw the weight of his influence into the light scale : that, in the mean time, he should take care to leave them, their bone of Jansenism to groud over at one another, and amuse themselves.

This last clause of the advice was calculated to make any stroke of authority, that the king should occasionally interpose, pass currently for belonging to the bottom of the dispute itself, if,

in such a chimera, it can be said to have a bottom. The effect proposed, as unsequential as it was to the general knowledge, not only of its being a mere amusement, but of the motives of the court for keeping it up, did not the less ensue. The wonder would have been if it had not, to those who know the nature of party-rage to be the same every where, always the more tenacious of its object in proportion to the triflingness of it, to which it so often has not the excuse of being blind, or of not being sensible of the existence of infinitely more important calls for attention, which are ruinously neglected for it.

That la Pompadour was the authoress of this policy of a neutrality, there is great reason to believe: but

that the spirit of it was pursued is certain. On one side, the parliament, on the other, the archbishop of Paris, exiled in their turns, with many other incidents of the like nature, in the course of the contest, plainly prove, that the king adopted, in practice, this trimming plan. But nothing made it more clear, nor the share of la Pompadour in it more suspected, than the dismissal of her favourite Machault, precisely at the time that d'Argenson was sacrificed to her. D'Argenson, as has been observed, was held to be the head of the clergy's party, Machault that of the parliament's. That the clergy should not take too much umbrage at the disgrace of its champion; the king still proceeding in the character he had chosen of ballance-master,

might think himself, by way of compromise, and to quiet suspicions, obliged to part with a minister obnoxious to that body on account of his favoring the cause of the parliament. Not that this dismissal would probably have taken place, without la Pompadour's consent; but she made, it seems, no scruple of sacrificing a friend, rather than lose her revenge on an enemy: since one could not be done without the other, or, at least, without too much violating that political system of neutrality, she is supposed to have herself suggested.

The difference however of the treatment of the ministers, manifested clearly enough, the difference of the motives on which they were displaced. D'Argenson had his post, without any

softening circumstances, taken from him, yet fell very little pitied. His being a stiff, austere character, both in speculation and practice, and a great zealot for despotism, the people in general were not much displeased that he should feel a stroke of it, though he was known to hate la Pompadour.

Machault had a large pension, and, as they term it, all the honors of war granted him. Being much the honefter man of the too, he was the more regretted, and his appearance on the popular side, that of the parliament, atoned in some measure for his complaisance to the king's mistress.

In the mean time, the consequence to la Pompadour of her being imagined to have given the king this advice, with respect to the two parties, was,

what was naturally expected would be, the detestation of both. Both felt that, by this means, they were made the tools of her ambition, without her having, beyond that, the least concern or regard for either. But even the neutrals and well-wishers, in general, to their king and country, did not extremely admire the plan itself. They found in it more of the female cunning than of manly prudence. They allowed it was well enough calculated to serve a present purpose of fleecing the people, with more facility to the court, but thought it a dangerous palliation, which not curing the evil, left it to gather more force, with time, in its inward fermentation. It appeared besides a kind of prostitution of the sovereign power to pecuniary views,

the delaying to restore authoritatively a peace that could not too soon have been procured between the contending parties, if the tranquillity of the subjects had been as dear to the king as their money. It was, in fact, a kind of craft not much superior, in point of dignity, to a petty-fogger's nursing a litigation for the sake of his gain by it.

But if Machault was given up, from a point of policy; the cardinal Bernis was sacrificed out of a point of resentment. He was especially the creature of her favor. Originally a gentleman of little or no fortune, he had taken to the church, as in those circumstances is commonly practised in France and elsewhere, rather as a temporal, than a spiritual resource. Upon this plan he

came to Paris, where, in the linsley-woolsey character of an abbot, he circulated his very agreeable person among the toilets of that capital. That of madam d'Estiolles, afterwards la Pompadour, had, among others, not escaped him, and nothing is more probable than that he might have designs upon her: But gallantry was, to do her justice, constitutionally not her foible; she was sensible to little else but vanity and ambition. Yet, as women, though they may be indisposed to any returns of love, are hardly ever heartily angry with the person on whom their charms have made an impression, she was not displeased at the assiduities of the abbot. She relished his little verses, and even took lessons of poetry from him; as far as a sonnet, an

epigram, or a madrigal. Even her vanity too found her account in the distinguished court, paid her by a man of his wit, pleasantry and figure. When she came into all her plenitude of power, it was easy for her to see that the more creatures she could collect round her, and on whose devotion to her she might depend, the more command she would have of affairs, by the means of such trusty instruments.

Among the friends of her inferior fortune, she remembered the abbot Bernis; and, in the haste to communicate to him the power she wanted to be excited, for her service, and at her discretion, she procured for him the most rapid promotion. Posts, titles, honors, lucrative dignities, were accumulated on his head, in so little a time, that it

was natural enough to conclude that fruit gathered so green could hardly become good or keep so. Embassador to Venice, plenipotentiary for the treaty of Versailles, minister of state, knight of the order of the Holy Ghost, and cardinal; all this, formed for him, so stupendous a rise in the state, as created, in the public, a suspicion of warmer motives than political ones for such an exertion of the marchioness to influence in his favor. Many pleasantries, both in prose and verse, were published, in consequence of this idea, be it repeated here, though, probably a false one. Certain it is, that no sensibility to such reflections had any share in his disgrace, which was almost as sudden as his rise. Every body knew that he had all the small talents of

society, but no one had suspected him of great ones for the state. So violent were the prejudices against his capacity, as a statesman, that, in vain, did he stiffen the flimsy of ecclesiastical foppery with the buckram of ministerial dignity: this only threw a ridicule the more upon him. He was currently, by way of derision, nicknamed the cardinal Richelieu. The carpet of the table, in his cabinet, officially littered with letters, projects, memorials, petitions, and so forth, passed rather for the parade of a paper-monger, (in *paperasseurs*) than for matter of solid political speculation. Perhaps too, the cardinal had, in the novelty of his elevation, aimed at throwing this kind of dust in the eyes of his visitors; for, otherwise, he was certainly wrong-

ed in the low opinion, generally conceived of his ministerial abilities. He had given just satisfaction in all the affairs on which his talents had been employed. In appearance only second to Rouillé, he was, under the auspices of the marchioness, in fact the principal manager of that famous treaty of Versailles, between the houses of Austria and Bourbon. When he came into ministerial power, he applied himself very closely to qualify himself for the administration, by a study of the domestic and foreign interests of France. Little by little he had familiarised himself to the elevation of his post, and was returning to his native ease, and elegance of manners, when those very qualities and accomplishments which should have endeared him

to the marchioness, became the object of her resentment, from the moment he gave signs of his daring to think that he was the king's faithful servant, and not her footman in livery. But as the excellence of a conduct, like that of an author, is sometimes made to depend on its commentator, the court-commentaries were not in his favor. The courtiers all judge of him by what, in his cause, they would certainly have yielded to; and the note of ingratitude which they put on his procedure, and to which none could be more disposed than themselves, was rather the cover of their interested servility, than the testimony of a better heart. The truth was, that la Pompadour, having certain points to carry, some of them pecuniary ones,

and some of them matters of state, she became petrified with astonishment, on finding that a man, whom she considered as her creature, and consequently as devoted, without reserve, to her will and pleasure, not only had the impudence to have an opinion of his own; but, in virtue of it, opposed the execution of her determinations. He had, it is true, with all the modesty, with all the respect imaginable, made his remonstrances to her, and backed them with all the power of reason and argument; but it was enough for her, that they were remonstrances, to excite her resentment, and to provoke in her a resolution to pull down the personage she had raised.

Before, however, she proceeded to that extremity, and probably from an

idea she could not with so good a grace, by unmaking him she had so lately made, afford cause of enticing her choice, she tried to prevail on the cardinal to desist from his official opposition, with assurance of forgiveness for the past. But, on his remaining inflexible, her patience deserted her; and abandoning herself to all the littleness of her character, she burst out into reproaches of all she had done for him; reminded him of the low obscure condition, out of which she had raised him, to one of the first posts of the state, and into the power of thus repaying her with so ungrateful a refractoriness. His answer to all this was just, noble, and well supported.

“ You cannot (says he) madam, be
“ more sensible than I am of the favors;

“ the essential benefits, which I shall
 “ ever own; ever with the warmest
 “ gratitude remember, that I have re-
 “ ceived from you : you have made
 “ me what I am ; suffer me to give
 “ you the strongest proof in my power,
 “ that I am not entirely, by my con-
 “ duct, unworthy of your good opinion :
 “ suffer me not to dishonor your
 “ choice. On this occasion, I have so
 “ profound a regard for you, that, in
 “ this non-complaisance, which is my
 “ present crime, I am taking your
 “ part against yourself ; I am persuad-
 “ ed you love the king, and, that you
 “ yourself would not forgive me, my
 “ consenting to any thing I shall judge
 “ to be injurious to his service. If I
 “ see these points, which you have at
 “ heart, in a different light from you,

“ and, in so seeing them, am in the
“ wrong, you may pity my error, but
“ you cannot condemn my procedure
“ in consequence of it. My place I
“ owe to you, and am ready to resign
“ it, the moment you will not allow
“ me to discharge my faithful duty to
“ the king, and to do justice to your
“ recommendation of me to his ma-
“ jesty.”

This answer had the effect, which it might naturally be expected to have on a little mind; it only the more exasperated the marchioness against him. Nor was it long before she so effectually employed her influence with the king, as to procure his dismissal from the ministry.

He happened to be with the ambassador from the court of Vienna, just as the authoritative letter came to his

hands, acquainting him therewith. Prepared for the contents of it, he read them with the most unaffected serenity, and folded it up again, with a smile, that had more the air of that satisfaction, which ever follows a procedure dictated by virtue, than even of contempt of the indignity of his treatment. Turning then to the Austrian minister, he only told him, that it was not to him he was thenceforward to address himself upon the subject on which they had been just conferring. The ambassador, on this, left him, and went away penetrated with an esteem for him, redoubled not only by the cause of his disgrace, which was no secret, but by his manner of taking it.

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